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DILEMMA OF THE ALLIES

IT is now clear that the argument which rallied a divided and distracted majority of Congressmen to vote for the Loan was not love of Britain or even a desire to restore world trade, but, quite simply, fear of Russia. The Loan, as one spokesman for the Administration after another stressed, must be passed in order to prevent a Socialist Britain from crossing into the other camp. In a remarkable speech, which apparently received general applause, Speaker Rayburn bluntly stated: "If we are not allied with the great British democracy, I fear somebody will be."

That such sentiments can be expressed so openly in the House of Representatives indicates the deterioration in American-Russian relations since last spring, when even Mr. Churchill was rebuked by his American admirers for hinting at the same thing. Now America, while repudiating as somewhat over-emphatic Mr. Bullitt's argument that the war should start at once, accepts the inevitability of an Anglo-American alliance, designed to prevent further Russian expansion and finally, by patient and persistent pressure, to squeeze Marshal Stalin into accepting the Anglo-Saxon concept of World Government including Mr. Baruch's plan for atom control.

It is in this spirit that the American Administration is willing to discuss the problems of the Middle East. The American Committee, which is busily at work this week with its British colleagues, will seek a solution of the Palestine problem designed to strengthen British military power in the Middle East and so to exclude Russia from this vital strategic area. In the same way American policy in China is now overtly designed to prop up a corrupt autocracy against the inroads of the Russian-controlled Chinese Communists. And whatever Mr. Bevin may say to the contrary, every one of his actions binds Britain yet more closely to her American ally, and separates her ever more sharply from the U.S.S.R. Who would have believed that one year after victory the main British consideration in Central Europe would be to prevent it becoming a site for Russian rocket guns aimed at this country?

It is against this background that we have to interpret the dialectic which led to a complete deadlock in the four Foreign Ministers' approach to the problem of Germany. Rearranged in their logical order, and stripped of the polite verbiage with which diplomatic speech conceals imperialist thought, the arguments ran somewhat as follows. Invoking the economic clauses of the Potsdam Agreement, Mr. Bevin and Mr. Byrnes began by complaining that the existing zonal barriers in Germany meant that Britain and the United States had to subsidise their "deficit" Zones, while the U.S.S.R. continued to draw reparations from their "surplus" Zone in the form not only of sequestrated factories, but of current production. Germany must be treated as an economic whole, and no surplus from any Zone should be exported as reparations so long as there was any deficit in the payment balance of any other Zone.

This, Mr. Molotov objected, would be a breach of the undertaking at Potsdam that the U.S.S.R. should receive reparations up to £2,500 million—a figure, incidentally, whose validity is questioned in London and Washington. He viewed favourably the idea of permitting Germany to increase her production of "peaceful" products and to expand her foreign trade; and he accepted the principle of German economic unity in the sense that the Ruhr, he considered, could not be separated from Germany, if Germany was to be a going concern. But economic unity could not be created without political unity; and, if there were to be a single German Government at the centre, then it must be "sufficiently democratic to extirpate all remnants of Fascism" and be willing and able to carry out reparation deliveries. The loose Federal structure proposed by the British and Americans would be unsatisfactory; and a condition precedent to a unitary Reich must be the establishment of a commission to investigate the progress of demilitarisation and demobilisation in the Western Zones. He would not, however, agree to such a commission inspecting industrial plants in the Russian Zone.

The British and American Foreign Ministers were thus placed in a somewhat awkward dilemma. If they assented to the principle that there should be a single "democratic" Government, they would be taking the first step towards acceptance of a German administration dominated by the pro-Russian United Socialist Party. If they insisted on economic without political unity, they would leave Mr. Molotov in the position of being able to pose as champion of a unitary Reich and, meantime, to adhere to the *status quo*, with all economic disadvantages thereby involved for the Western Zones. It was, in the end, the second alternative which they chose. The Conference settled nothing, and dispersed on the understanding that the German problem would be further reviewed sometime in the late autumn, after the next meeting of the Assembly of the United Nations. Meanwhile, the Big Four are to give consideration to the last-minute offer made by Mr. Byrnes that, failing the economic unity of Germany, barriers might be lowered between the British, French and American Zones.

Such a development would doubtless be assailed by Moscow as implying the permanent splitting of Germany into two halves, of which the Western would be built up by Britain and the U.S.A. as a base for aggression against the Russian sphere of influence in Europe. It is doubtful if either the Foreign Office or the U.S. State Department is prepared to adopt without qualification a policy which would certainly mean the end of the Four-Power Control Council in Berlin and the final death to all hopes of any sort of accommodation between East and West in Europe. What is more likely to happen is that the physical dismantling of German factories in the Western Zones will be suspended, that there will be a partial pooling of the resources of the three Western Zones, and that on this basis matters will be allowed to drift. But drift is just what the British cannot politically or financially afford—even with the aid of an American loan, the object of which, as explained by Senator Rayburn, is as clear in Moscow as in Washington.

Hungarian Difficulties

Financial chaos in Hungary is bringing in its train political crisis. Faced with insurmountable difficulties in coping with heavy payments for reparations and the cost of occupation, and at the same time financing the reconstruction of a country devastated by the war and stripped of its whole gold reserve and most of its productive assets, Mr. Nagy's Government has been swept along by an inflationary tide. It has failed to restore production adequately, and it has been unable to impose effective taxation or control of prices. The inevitable result has been unlimited recourse to the printing press, and the pengo is now valueless. In these circumstances, Hungary must secure assistance from some quarter. Mr. Nagy has recently visited both London and Washington in search of aid, but apparently without much success. Defeated by the Smallholders in last November's elections, the Hungarian Communists are now in a position to argue that help for Hungary can only come from Russia, and that that will be dependent upon a reconstruction of the Government. Indeed, the Russian General commanding in Hungary is reported to have demanded the dismissal of the Right-wing Smallholders in the Cabinet, and a general purge in Hungary of " anti-democratic " elements. These demands will be resisted fiercely by the Right, which has bitterly attacked the moderate land reforms instituted by the Government and is now exploiting popular resentment at the cession of the whole of Transylvania to Rumania. Under cross-fire both from the Communists and the dispossessed landlords, Mr. Nagy's Government is in danger of being shot down. It might be saved, even now, by material assistance from the West; but if the impression is allowed to grow in Hungary that shipping, rolling stock and other assets removed from Hungary and neighbouring countries by the Germans are now being retained by Britain and America in order to enforce acceptance by the Danubian countries of " capitalist " trade with the West, then there will be less and less disposition in Hungary to resist the incorporation of the Hungarian economy in that of the U.S.S.R.

Polish Plebiscite

In one sense the results of the Polish plebiscite are decisive. In a high poll, impressive majorities were recorded in favour of the Provisional Government's three points of policy—68 per cent. voting for abolition of the Senate, 77 per cent. for land reform and nationalisation of basic industries, and 91 per cent. for the retention of Poland's present western frontier. In another sense, however, the plebiscite has had no positive results: it has done nothing to alleviate the tense political situation arising from the fact that M. Mikolajczyk's Polish Peasant Party (P.S.L.), though nominally in the Government, is gravitating into direct opposition to it. Nor has it yet been proved to what extent the P.S.L. has lost its hold over the peasantry. In urging his supporters to vote against the single chamber, although he and his Party had consistently opposed in the past a bi-cameral system, M. Mikolajczyk had elected to challenge the Government in a singularly unrealistic way. Moreover, though it is admitted that the polling was orderly and well organised, charges are being made by the P.S.L. that the Government faked the counting. The correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* in Poland has reported circumstantially evidence of irregularities in some polling booths after the ballot boxes were closed. The Government has admitted that in certain country districts, where the P.S.L. might be supposed to be strong, ballot boxes were removed, after the votes had been cast, to the office of the security police. This, they say, was a necessary precaution in view of the fact that armed terrorist bands were gathering to attack the polling booths. M. Mikolajczyk, who is talking of appealing to the guarantors of the Yalta agreement to declare the plebiscite invalid, has a different version. The weakness of his position is that the Polish Peasant Party now embraces in its Right wing many of the least responsible reactionary elements in Poland; and M. Mikolajczyk himself seems to have been quite unable to take action against terrorist organisations such as the N.S.Z. The bitterness of the ideological cleavage in Poland was illustrated strikingly last week when the Primate, Cardinal Hlond, issued a statement virtually justifying the Kielce pogrom on July 4th, when 34 Jews were killed. Anti-semitism, he said, was the result of the fact that Jews today occupied leading positions in the Government, and were endeavouring to introduce a social system hateful to the majority of Poles. This is a remarkable expression of Vatican opinion on the ethics of political murder.

Coalition in Italy

Italy has now joined France and Holland in the select club of European countries in which a Left Centre coalition is dominated for the time being by a Catholic Party in which progressive elements who took part in the resistance and clerical reactionaries jostle each other uncomfortably for dominance. In the administration which Signor de Gaspari has at length succeeded in forming, the Communists have had to be content, so far as important Ministries are concerned, with the portfolios of Finance and Justice, and the Socialists have been entrusted only with the relatively minor posts of Industry and Public Works, though Signor Nemi, without portfolio, is to officiate in practice as deputy Premier, and is to take over Foreign Affairs after the peace conference. For the time being the Premier will not merely act as Minister for Foreign Affairs; he holds also the Ministry of the Interior, and a Christian Democrat becomes Minister of Education. The issue of confessional schools is likely to become as acute in Italy as in France; but for the moment the situation of the new Government is overshadowed by the grim problems of prices and wages of Italy, and by the almost universal feeling in the country that the Italian peace terms are a poor reward for " working the passage home." The decision of the astute Communist leader, Signor Togliatti, to stand out of the Cabinet and concentrate on organising his party, is a fair indication that he foresees trouble ahead for the new Republic's first Government.

Chinese Confusion

Although nominally enjoying a truce, the Communist and Kuomintang armies, in close contact at many points, are preparing for their next fight. This week, Communist troops have landed near Tientsin and at Kiachow Bay near Tsingtao. The choice is significant; both are American naval bases. While General Marshall tries to bridge the chasm between Kuomintang and Communist, his Government continues to provide military transport and equipment for the Kuomintang, which is thereby encouraged to disregard the democratic pledges which General Marshall had persuaded it to make. Plans are made for an American military advisory group to train the Chinese army of the future. Chinese progressives demand that American forces should be withdrawn from China and that the Chinese Government shall be made representative and democratic before it receives any loan from America. They regard the recent decision to call the National Assembly for November 12th, not as a move towards democracy, but as an effort to frame a constitution as far as possible immunised against both the Communists and the Democratic League. To political confusion add economic corruption—a fact now openly exposed by a cable from the Director-General of Unrra demanding the elimination of " personalities and politics " in the organisation of Chinese relief. All but vital food shipments are now suspended since rehabilitation workers, paid in food, were offering their supplies for sale in the black market.

The Loan—and What Then?

Thanks to a more rapid recovery of exports than we had anticipated, this year's trading deficit looks like being rather less formidable than the earlier forecasts suggested; but it will be very large, even at the best, and, of course, its size will be swollen by the high costs involved in our responsibility for Western Germany. Exports are at present as much as we can supply, at any prices we can reasonably ask; but that does not mean that we can rely on a continuance of their expansion at the present rate. The real difficulty will come when the absolute needs of other countries for machinery essential for their own recovery have been met, and when they begin to scrutinise prices and look round for sellers who can give credit. The American Loan has not merely to tide us over our present deficit, but to last us while we get our exports stabilised at a high level and at fully competitive prices. We can therefore by no means afford to treat it as *carte blanche* for buying what we should like to have. It must be used primarily for food and for machinery and essential industrial materials. The Government is right to ease the situation in respect of petrol, paper and tobacco; and it should be possible to give the home consumer a rather larger share of home output at present directed to exports. No one, however, should expect a great deal, even of these things.

Congress and Prices

One factor that must not be forgotten is that any rise in prices in the United States will mean so much deducted from the real value of the loan. The best informed American opinion seems to put the average rise in retail prices after a fortnight's freedom at from 12 to 15 per cent., but with very wide differences between commodities. The Senate's latest draft Bill, excluding practically all food from the scope of control, would almost certainly have been vetoed by the President if it had gone to him for signature in its present form. But it will not do so, as the House of Representatives has turned the measure down. The Senate will now have to think again. The President is standing out strongly against accepting any Bill which he regards as certain to be ineffective in keeping the cost of living down; but he will not find it easy to get Congress to pass a Bill that is not acceptable to the farmers and nothing they like is compatible with the President's objection. The Labour Unions are holding their hands for the moment until they see what is likely to happen to prices. If no Bill, or only an ineffective Bill, gets through, the fun will begin on the Labour front.

Bread Rationing and By-Elections

The uncertainties surrounding future wheat supplies from the United States, whose Government has already ceased to buy grain for export in view of the jump in decontrolled prices, are perhaps the strongest argument in favour of bread rationing in this country. The concessions which Mr. Strachey has now announced will be welcomed by hard-worked mothers of families, and are politically well judged. They go, however, a considerable way towards negativing the chances that bread rationing will automatically lead to any substantial cutting down of British consumption. But it by no means follows, as the " mutinous " section of the baking industry argues, that rationing is therefore unnecessary. If all goes well with European crops and American exports, the rationing Order can quickly be repealed; but it is imperative to have the system in force as an assurance against unforeseen accidents. We write before Mr. Strachey again sees the bakers, and it will not be until Monday that we shall know how far they are prepared to go in defying Parliament. In current by-elections Tory candidates appear to be basing their whole campaign on the cry " The Government promised you prosperity, but Socialism is giving you less

bread, less beer, less coal." We doubt if the electors will be greatly impressed by this flimsy argument, which invites them to ignore all the facts of the world situation and to forget that, if Tory proponents of "free enterprise and no control" had had their way, things would have been catastrophic.

More Houses

Mr. Tomlinson, speaking at Eccles on Monday, estimated that 200,000 new houses would be ready by the end of the year, divided equally between temporary and permanent dwellings. This is a much better prospect than is suggested by the monthly figures of houses finished and under construction; and, if Mr. Tomlinson's estimates are well based, they quite dispose of the attacks that are being made on the Government on the strength of the recently published figures for May. Of course, 200,000 houses a year, half of them temporary, is an utterly inadequate figure in relation to our housing needs. Pre-war building was at the rate of 350,000-360,000 houses a year; and we need to go a long way beyond that in order to clear off the enormous arrears that have accumulated since 1939. Still, everyone knew, when the present Government took office, that it was bound to take a long time to get the industry up to a satisfactory rate of output; and on the whole things appear to be going a lot better than they were a few months ago. The brick supply is improving fast; but there is now an acute shortage of slates and roofing tiles. Baths are still much below the need, but the supply in that case can be fairly quickly increased.

Marriage Bar

We are glad to see that the House of Commons is to discuss the absurd ban on the employment of married women in the Civil Service. Mr. John Freeman is raising the question on the adjournment next week. No tenable defence can be made for the practice of training women to be public servants and then sacking them when they marry. We have had all this out in the case of married teachers. If women marry, decide to have children and need a long time away from work, that might be a reason for terminating their appointments. The result of the present system is virtually to compel a number of professional women to "live in sin" and even to have children out of wedlock—which now happens and isn't sense. It is true that some of the Civil Service unions, especially amongst the lower grades, have voted against the employment of married women in years past. At a time when the country needs all the workers it can get, this is no argument at all. Men have long fought a losing battle against giving women an equal opportunity in the professions, and prejudice will not prove more obstinate among Civil Servants than among doctors or lawyers.

Mihailovich

Every country passing through its formative years of revolution and counter-revolution executes the leaders of the unsuccessful faction. British history records a long series of such political executions. We only look foolish if we condemn the Yugoslav Government, which is changing a primitive and a divided country, under Serb dictatorship, into a Communist federation, for following the historic practice. All we can say is that just as our political executions often seem to the historian to have been mistaken, so Tito would probably have been wise to show clemency to Mihailovich. In his final speech Mihailovich seems to have spoken the truth. He was juridically guilty; he fought for lost and unworthy causes; he was responsible, directly or indirectly, for violent crimes against the emergent regime. He was swept away, as he says, in the maelstrom of history.

PARLIAMENT: Coal and the B.B.C.

Wednesday.

It has been a tag-end week. Last Wednesday the House considered the Lords' amendments to the Coal Bill. The Tories tried to prolong the proceedings by twitting the Minister on the improvements which he had accepted from their Lordships. Never, they averred, had a Minister climbed down so meekly. But Mr. Shinwell, who knows that his pugnacity at least cannot be seriously questioned, reserved his views on "the other place" for the miners of Morpeth. Even when Captain Cruikshank pointed to the fifteen pages of amendments, he left it to Frank Bowles to remind the House that Captain Cruikshank himself had accepted 28 pages of Lords' amendments for his Conservative Coal Bill. In Thursday's heat several hundreds of members entertained their friends on the terrace, while inside the Chamber Civil Aviation and Cables and Wireless were lethargically nationalised.

The effects of a fine week-end were quickly dissipated by yet another of the interminable stages of the Finance Bill. Many Members are wondering whether the Select Committee on Procedure will find any way of cutting down a process which may compel the Chancellor to make the same speech on half a dozen occasions. Not that he does not do it well.

Meanwhile a Supply Day, devoted to the B.B.C., was sandwiched in on Tuesday. The excellent attendance proved that the emptiness of the House on the occasion of the Colonial Debate was not due to a Royal Garden Party. Every Member listens to and hopes to speak in *The Week in Westminster*; and this makes them all experts on broadcasting. Mr. Henderson Stewart, one of the star broadcasters, opened the proceedings as Leader of the National Liberals, thereby providing the House with the unique spectacle of ten little National Liberals all in a row. As for his speech itself, Mr. McMillan summed it up best when he said that he had marshalled his supporters better than his arguments. Then came Herbert Morrison for the Government. He expressed with evident conviction his admiration for the Public Corporation, his determination to keep the B.B.C. out of party politics and his dislike of such alien innovations as sponsored programmes. But he seriously overstated his case when he claimed that the B.B.C. pays its artists adequately and argued that it provides the best average of entertainment in the world. Only Mr. Butcher, in winding up for the Opposition, made the point that, just because it does not pay enough, its entertainment programmes are vastly inferior to its news, talks and repertory theatre. But he did not draw the obvious conclusion that the choice is between expensive and sponsored Variety and the present level of imbecility.

The Opposition's demand for an inquiry was half-hearted. Brendan Bracken attacked American commercialism and paid almost as many tributes to the B.B.C. as Mr. Morrison. He seemed far more concerned to stop an inquiry into the press than to obtain one for broadcasting. Back bench speeches from all sides of the House showed a support for the B.B.C. as an institution almost as uncritical as that displayed by Sir Ian Fraser, who took half an hour to say that the B.B.C. should never be investigated. As usual, time was wasted on regional recriminations, but there were competent speeches by Gordon Walker—after an inexplicable lapse into humourless priggery—by Megan Lloyd George, charming and well-informed, and by Ernest Davies, who gave the Front Bench a lesson in brevity. There was also a racy interlude by Mr. Hale, the only Labour Member who rivals Sir William Darling as a "character." Serious criticism of the B.B.C. came from the two most unrepresentative and frequently most stimulating Members of the House, Mr. W. J. Brown and Mr. Pickthorn. The latter remarked of the opposition to sponsored programmes that it arose "from the extreme snobbishness and old-fashionedness characteristic of Labour Members. They really cannot believe that anything to do with business and trade is really befitting a gentleman or, if they prefer the term, a 'comrade.'" As so often, the Member for Cambridge had failed to observe the other half of the truth. Snobbishness with regard to broadcasting seems to be, in Mr. Morrison's words, "a British institution" and shared by all classes. This was faithfully reflected in the Debate.

PHINEAS

INQUIRY INTO THE PRESS

A COMMISSION to investigate the British press, demanded by the N.U.J. and by many M.P.s, would be good for the press, the public, and, not least, for the M.P.s themselves. Many illusions would be swept away and some removable evils would be exposed. Possibly a British solution for the baffling problem of how to educate a democracy without destroying its freedom would be discovered. In any case, a great deal of valuable information would be brought to light. Various informed articles and books have been written on the British press, and PEP published a valuable survey before the war. But no full or authoritative account of the press as a public institution exists in the English language.

The basic confusion is between the press as a political influence and as a branch of commerce. Every textbook of government from Bentham onwards assumes that it is the main function of the press (recently shared by the B.B.C.) to pass on in popular form the political information which a citizen must possess if he is to exercise his vote intelligently. The assumption was reasonable in the 19th century; until the time of Northcliffe most newspapers were run either in the Liberal or Conservative interest, making profits, if they did, as an incidental result of their political activity. They were edited by men whose names were well known to the public and who expressed, through editorial columns (then carefully separated from the news), a definite political point of view. But these political newspapers were only read by those few hundred thousand persons who then ruled England. They did not touch the masses, who were largely illiterate until a generation grew up which benefited by the first compulsory and universal Education Act of 1870. In the Nineties this public wanted to read, but had not learned to think; wanted news but had not learned to estimate its importance. It offered the business man an extraordinary commercial opportunity.

Looking back, we see that England had a choice between deliberately deciding to provide this public with the basis of a political and social education, or of leaving it to be commercially exploited by Lord Northcliffe, his friends and imitators. In a free capitalist country, the first possibility was not even considered. The rulers of England decided in 1870 to "educate their masters" to the extent of allowing them to read and write and make themselves capable of skilled labour. But to educate them to be masters was far from their desires, even when the franchise was universal.

The object of the new press proprietors, as they themselves said, was "purely commercial." They collaborated with the advertising interests in an elaborate psychological experiment which proved that politics only had news value in so far as they touched in some dramatic way on the personal interests of newspaper readers. War and warlike news, crime, sex, sport and the innumerable human interest stories of everyday life were much more readily marketable. Thus many of the criticisms levelled against popular newspapers for their failure to educate the public politically is beside the mark. That is not the reason for their existence. They exist primarily to make money, and to do that the simple method is to give the public "what it wants." And what the public wants from the point of view of anybody selling news is not that which a citizen most desires when he is thinking seriously about public affairs, but that for which the largest number of persons are ready to pay a penny.

A number of results followed. Some of the old political papers like *The Times* and the

Manchester Guardian modified their make-up but continued with their old tradition of appealing to a restricted public which wants to understand public affairs. Most of such papers, however, were driven out of the market by the competition of the commercial press and were absorbed or bought up by the great new popular syndicates. The old independent editors disappeared one by one from Fleet Street; proprietors, business and advertising managers controlled the papers. Some newspapers survived the storm by compromise. The *Daily Herald*, unsuccessful as a purely political paper, became the joint property of the Labour Party and Odham's, and is now the official organ of the Labour Party, with a very large circulation. The *News Chronicle* maintains its position as one of the "big four" by a praiseworthy compromise between commercialism and liberal idealism. While some, particularly among the Sunday papers, reach the largest circulations by concentrating on the appeal of crime, sex and sport, other great circulations, notably the *Daily Express*, which sells some 3½ millions daily, win their sales by simplifying and manipulating the news for the least thoughtful public, at the same time reflecting throughout their news as well as their avowedly editorial columns the peculiar political prejudices of their proprietors. Proprietors, who may in some cases have thought that they had no object except to make money, naturally developed political sympathies with the moneyed class; they found in themselves a desire for power, entered largely into politics; often accepted peerages, and used the mighty organs of mass suggestion, which had been commercially built up, for party or personal propaganda.

In this complex situation, one of the most interesting subjects for inquiry would be the influence of the advertiser. We could quote individual instances in which newspaper policy has been directly influenced by groups of advertisers, but in this country the newspaper is stronger than any advertising interest and the view that advertisers regularly dictate policy is fallacious. The chief effect of large scale advertising is to increase the dividends of the newspaper, and indeed it is only advertising that renders possible the development of the present million circulation newspapers. Therefore the indirect influence of the advertiser is immense. Every paper wishes commercial interests to believe that its readers are people who are likely to buy the commodities advertised in it. They are not likely to adopt a political line which the advertisers as a whole will dislike, and newspapers that do take such a political line find themselves handicapped by a lack of advertisements. One result of the marriage of news to advertisement has been that the public has learned to expect for its penny a paper which costs more than a penny to produce. This has a good as well as a bad side. For, as against the general effect on news presentation and policy which results from the paper's dependence upon advertisers, must be set the alternative danger that newspapers which did not receive money from advertisers would tend to look elsewhere for subsidies. Thus, in France, where advertising is far less developed than in Britain or America, the press has been notoriously corrupt and has continuously taken bribes not only from banks and French Governments, but also from foreign governments, notably Tsarist Russia, Imperial Japan and Fascist Italy.

The tendency towards monopoly of which the M.P.s complain is a great and growing danger. Our provincial press, which used to be independent and often excellent, has been largely bought up by the great syndicates. The political line is dictated from London by a handful of men, who represent perhaps the best example of the way in which plutocracy perverts the purposes of democracy. It must be noted, however, as an advantage of the free enterprise system, that our newspapers exist to meet demand, and we have, apart from the large-scale monopolistic press, a large variety of smaller independent organs whose influence is out of all proportion to their sales. Although the circulation of the independent weekly press does not reach in all as much as 200,000, every copy is read and considered by a large number of persons. We believe we do not exaggerate when we say that the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION is read every week by about half a million people. Moreover, this type of influence, being steadily exerted upon thoughtful people, is far greater than that of newspapers which rely on the changing and unstable power of suggestion. The same remarks apply to the remaining serious London and provincial papers, and to a host of smaller publications with specialised circulations. It is one of the encouraging signs of our times that the responsible treatment of political and social issues has far more news value than it ever had in the past. A new public has grown up; it is the product of secondary education, reinforced by adult education in civilian life and among the Forces during the war. There is far greater demand than ever before in our history for serious books and thoughtful publications. We are in fact witnessing a revolution similar to, though less spectacular than, that which Lord Northcliffe exploited with such conspicuous commercial success.

The proposal to examine the institution of the press is therefore peculiarly timely. Various proposals for improving or checking the excesses of newspapers have been proposed and must be fully considered. Many of them have been made by people who, through insufficient knowledge of the inside of the newspaper world, do not appreciate that papers live on public appetite, and rely primarily on their entertainment value. This basic fact must be borne in mind when suggestions are made for taxing or abolishing commercial advertising, some of which is obviously sheer economic waste and some of which is valuable in informing the public. The press, as a vehicle of advertising, is an integral part of our economic system; and accordingly every suggestion for restricting or taking the profits out of commercial press ownership will be resisted by capitalism as a whole.

A commission of inquiry into the press, therefore, faces a far more difficult task than one which inquires into the B.B.C., which, as a public institution, is jealously regarded by the press and by capitalists generally. But the fundamental issue to be faced is the same in both cases. In the Soviet Union, which has been well described as a vast compulsory educational institution, a group of men with a single philosophy and idea control all the organs of publicity, and hope by an intensive process of education to create a new system of ethics, a new outlook on politics and a new form of social consciousness. Here, if you like, is the Platonic ideal of the State ruled by philosopher-kings. Two objections arise. It may be argued that such a vast effort to mould the mind of man cannot be successful; it may also be argued that it may be too successful. It is undoubtedly true that in Russia a vast literate population is emerging with a far more rational outlook than any that would have been achieved through the machinery of commercial publicity. But while the advantages of this deliberately planned education for common citizenship are domestically obvious, there is also a grave danger that the State, itself safe from the salutary influence of independent criticism, may so impregnate the Soviet public with hostility to foreign peoples that world disaster will be unavoidable. On the other hand, it may be held that free enterprise in British or American newspapers produces an exploitation of the baser side of humanity which may be no less fatal to democracy, while the power of suggestion, limited in home affairs, is of illimitable influence and danger in the realm of foreign politics where the citizen is gullible because ignorant. Is there, once again, a middle way, such as Britain is perhaps the most likely of the nations to find, by which the press may be transformed into a responsible institution without taking from it the right of free criticism and free discussion of ideas which we have learned to regard as our most valuable heritage?

FERMENT IN INDIA

[The author of this article acted as an adviser to the Cabinet Mission throughout the negotiations in India. He here expresses his personal views and not necessarily those of the Cabinet Mission.]

INDIA is in a state of suspended ferment. The currents of nationalism running all over the Far East have reached her but have not come openly to the surface. The British, in the role of unnatural safety valve, keep them submerged by maintaining law and order and continuing the machinery of government. When the lid is finally taken off something is bound to happen. It may only be riots and minor disturbances, or there may be two sorts of civil war — Hindus against Muslims, and later the workers against the rest. But, if the British fail to find soon a way of handing over smoothly, there may first be a revolution to drive them out.

A successful war of independence against the British would probably bring the Congress Socialists out on top and would give them for all time the rallying cry of "Remember the Revolution when we drove out the British." After it, there would be no chance of friendly relations between Britain and India. A communal civil war would drag on for years, and tail off into an uneasy stalemate while millions starved and the hope of economic development was put off indefinitely. The first round of a fight between Right and Left would almost certainly be won by the potentially Fascist elements.

The first undoubted effect of the Cabinet Mission was to avert an immediate eruption. It remains our responsibility to make unnecessary the war of independence and to assist in preparing a framework which will reduce to a minimum the chances of internal conflict. We cannot expect to do more, and that is a gargantuan task.

The task falls into two parts: The establishment of a constituent assembly to work out an agreed constitution to replace the Government of India Act, 1935; and the speedy formation of a representative Indian Interim Government to administer the country until presentation of the new constitution. The second part still remains, but the first has been accomplished. It was accomplished by the obstinate refusal of the Cabinet Mission to admit defeat in the face of difficulties which the Indian leaders, if they would agree on nothing else, all agreed were insoluble.

When the Cabinet Mission arrived the atmosphere was so thick with reiterated slogans and "positively last words" that both sides were heavily chained to their own positions and could see no point in even discussing a basis for a compromise. It was further complicated by the inherent inability of the Indians to conceive of an India in which the British were not the final arbiters, although they believed that we were sincere in our attempts to transfer power. It was not so much that they shrank from taking power but that they were desperately anxious to get it on their own terms. They are awed by the prospect of running this vast country, possibly without British support, and they cannot feel confident in their ability to do it unless they get a Government on conditions favourable to their own particular viewpoint. From a distance that makes their hesitation in accepting independence, when it is so near their grasp, appear irresponsible. To some extent the Indian political leaders are irresponsible. The definition of irresponsibility is being without responsibility. The only cure for it is to see that they get responsibility without delay.

This clogged atmosphere was largely dissipated by constant suggestions of new ways of approach until at last one proved sufficiently attractive to lead to the Simla Conference. There two important concessions were made. The Muslim League agreed to drop the demand for an entirely separate Sovereign State for ten years. Congress tried to alleviate Muslim fears by allowing their representatives in the Constituent Assembly the right of vetoing any proposal raising a major communal issue. On these two concessions the

Mission's proposals of May 16th were founded. These proposals were in no sense an award. They were the terms of a contract which the Cabinet Mission suggested both sides should agree to as the prerequisite to entering a Constituent Assembly. The conditions of the contract sought to reconcile the outstanding differences.

To meet the demand for Pakistan, the provisions lay down that the Provincial representatives in the Constituent Assembly should be divided into three sections. Section 'A' contains the Hindu majority provinces about which there is no dispute. Section 'B' consists of the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province and Sind, all Muslim majority provinces. Finally, in Section 'C,' Bengal, a Muslim majority province, and Assam, a non-Muslim majority province, are grouped together. When the representatives arrive at the Constituent Assembly they are obliged to work in these three sections. It is left to the representatives in each section to decide whether or not their section will establish a Government and legislature, within the Union of India, for their particular Group of Provinces. In the last resort this decision will be made by a majority vote. But to safeguard a Province against being forced to remain in a Group that it does not like, it has the right to opt out of the Group, when it can presumably join another Group, *after* the Constitution for the Group has been made.

This gives much of the substance of Pakistan by allowing the Muslims to control their own affairs in the areas in which they have a majority. To prevent the Constitution being incapable of alteration, any Province can call for its reconsideration at the end of ten years and afterwards at ten-yearly intervals. In addition, the original terms of the proposals can be varied at the Constituent Assembly itself by a majority of each of the two major communities. To satisfy the insistence of Congress on the Unity of India, it is provided that there will be a Union Government, dealing with Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications for all British India and such States as are willing to join. Fortunately the States are aware that in the new India they must conform or be prepared for conflicts, and they have so far indicated their willingness to acquiesce in this arrangement. As well as an executive there is a legislature in which any question raising a major communal issue will require for its decision a majority of the two major communities.

The Muslim League accepted the proposals with only one reservation, which is not of very great importance. They chose to regard the provision for reconsideration of the Constitution as an implied right of secession, which it is not. Congress raised a more serious objection. If there was no compulsion in the proposals they did not see why Provincial representatives should be forced into three sections from the very outset, if it was against their will. Congress argue that the North-West Frontier Province has a Congress Government, and will not want to associate itself with the Punjab and Sind. The same argument applies to Assam which not only has a Congress Government but a non-Muslim majority. Consequently these two Provinces should not be compelled to remain in Sections 'B' and 'C' but should be allowed to exercise their right to opt out *before* the Constitution for the Group is made. This objection arises from Congress desire to make the Groups as weak as possible, or to do away with them altogether, although they know that without the Grouping system there would be no co-operation at all from the Muslim League.

However, after many requests for clarification and despite the Mission's refusal to modify their proposals, Congress decided to join the proposed Constituent Assembly, reserving the right to renew the attack on the grouping system during the Constitution-making. But this was not done until after they had rejected the invitation to come into the Interim Government. Ever since I first met Gandhi last January he has maintained the same attitude. "You can either have a Congress Government or a Muslim League Government but you can't have both."

As a Muslim League Government, with a Congress majority in the Central Assembly and with eight Congress Ministries out of eleven in the Provinces, could not keep itself in office, the only alternative would be a solely Congress Government. And that has been the Congress aim all along—a Congress Interim Government assisted by a British-run administration. It was their contention that the Cabinet Mission should not have begun with a solution to the long-term problem. That should have waited until after the Interim Government had been set up, even though it would have ruled out participation by the Muslim League, who refused to be drawn into a Central Government until their future status had been guaranteed.

From the British point of view it is essential to have a Coalition Government. Parliament is ultimately responsible for the Government of India so long as the Government of India Act remains in force. If there is government by one party there will be disturbances by the other. The Viceroy would be obliged to call on British troops to quell the disturbances and Britain would then be taking sides in an Indian civil war. It is true that Attlee on March 15th said: "We cannot allow a minority to place a veto on the advance of the majority," but he did not say that a majority would be allowed to rule a minority with the aid of the British. By the ordinary processes of democracy the government should be given to the party which can muster the most heads. But in India political allegiances are owed to parties by communities. The parties do not cut across the community boundaries, and the counting of heads leaves one community out for ever.

The particular rock on which the negotiations for the Interim Government foundered was the proposed nomination by Congress of a Nationalist Muslim in their quota of seats. The Muslim League could not agree to this, or their claim to be the only representative Muslim organisation would have been vitiated. Congress could not withdraw without losing their counter-claim to be a national movement embracing all communities, and admitting that they were a Hindu organisation. Rightly or wrongly the Muslim League were given an assurance that the composition of the interim Government suggested by the Cabinet Mission would not be altered by communities without their consent. So nothing more could be done.

In the meanwhile a Caretaker Government is in office while a fresh approach is made to the second of the insoluble problems, and the people of India, who are bewildered by most of the arguments on both sides, wait for a national Government which alone can bring them alleviation of their poverty and malnutrition and development of their agriculture and industry.

WOODROW WYATT

(To be concluded)

A LONDON DIARY

WHEN the Cabinet wants to settle the Indian question, it sends three top-ranking Cabinet Ministers. When it comes to peace-making for the whole world, Mr. Bevin takes with him, apart from Mr. Alexander, only two junior Ministers, Hector McNeil and Glenvil Hall. Mr. Bevin cannot be sure there will not be differences between the Great Powers in Paris, but at least there will be none within the British delegation. The striking comparison is between Paris 1946 and Versailles 1919. Then, there was a consciousness that the great issues of the world were being settled, and it was taken for granted that Lloyd George, Balfour, and Bonar Law would all go, while Curzon, Milner and others would come in if they were wanted. The comparative qualities of the delegations reflect the change in the importance of the occasion. Paris 1946 will deal with only the periphery of the problems which the Ministers of the Big Three cannot decide elsewhere.

* * *

Judge my astonishment when I saw in front of me the translation of a Soviet broadcast headed "NEW STATESMAN'S Enslavement Plan for Balkans." I rubbed my eyes and began again. The commentator, Mr. Mikhail Mikhailov, directs his fire against an article by Maurice Edelman which appeared in this journal on July 6th. He does not refer to Edelman by name, nor mention that the article expresses the views of a Socialist M.P. Mr. Edelman's proposal was to invite the U.S.S.R. to take part in international corporations in the Ruhr, Balkans and Middle East. Edelman made the same proposal in the debate on the adjournment in the Commons the other night. The proposal is not new, but part of a familiar "T.V.A." approach to the problem of relations between the West and Russia. The objects are to raise the standard of living of "backward areas" and to substitute co-operation for rivalry between Russia and the West. In Mr. Mikhailov's account, the Russian share in the proposal disappears altogether! He declares that the plan "smacks of Hitler's New Europe," that its object is to "persuade the Bulgarian and Rumanian peasant to hand over his flax and tobacco crop dirt cheap to representatives of London firms, getting a few herrings instead." The NEW STATESMAN'S article, according to him, "has the merit of stating fully and frankly the plans of the big chiefs of the City," and he asks why proposals for "the semi-colonial enslavement of whole nations appeared under the heading 'Peace with Russia.'" The interesting point is why Soviet commentators should want to falsify the whole policy and outlook of this journal?

* * *

A British soldier who took part in the search which led to the discovery of the secret Hagana armoury at Yagur informs me that it was quite untrue that any women or children were touched, and that the behaviour, at least of his own unit, was good. Trouble started when some settlers refused to leave their houses, and others congregated in the dininghall, to prevent it being searched. Tear-gas was then used, and a good deal of destruction was caused in finding the arms caches. Caches were found in a great many houses. The settlers offered passive resistance, and all the men refused to give their names and so had to be temporarily arrested. My friend says:

> The trouble arose not with the wanted people, but with the 98 per cent. of innocent people against whom the High Commissioner had emphasised in his broadcast that the operation was not directed. We wanted to leave the innocent people alone, but they would not let us leave them alone. Even those who have disliked terrorism, and openly denounced it, deliberately behaved suspiciously, so as to conceal the terrorists. This prolonged the search enormously and tempers got short on both sides. Both the troops and the settlers showed great self-restraint under what each of them regarded as intolerable provocation. It was a terrible experience to arrest men with concentration camp numbers tattooed on their arms or wearing British war medals and to be reviled by them as worse than the S.S. and Gestapo. Of course, the effect on nearly all the troops has been to increase their anti-semitism. They had been told that most of the Jews were peaceable and only a tiny minority are terrorists, but this is a refinement which a soldier does not understand when he hears of his comrades being kidnapped or murdered in cold blood. And anyway, there was no evidence in Yagur of any difference between the terrorists and the others. The settlers were absolutely solid.

What is likely to be the effect of this round-up operation on Jewish opinion? I am told that it has stiffened the resistance movement and unified it. The idea that one could conduct an operation against the terrorists, without antagonising every member of the National Home, is incredibly naïve. What happened on that week-end has poisoned Anglo-Jewish relations for

many years. But at least he assured me the troops did behave with restraint, though he had heard that in other areas units which had made a habit of looting during the liberation of Europe did not change that habit in Palestine.

* * *

I seem to remember that during the war one of the favourite themes of the British press was the contrast between the poverty of the occupied territories and the standard of living of the German occupying troops, including their wives. Times have changed. In last week's *Sunday Chronicle* I read a long despatch from a Special Correspondent at British Army H.Q. which was headlined, "No Queueing for B.A.O.R. Wives in Germany. £1 a week Home with Seven Rooms and an Ice-Chest." The article described the accommodation prepared for the wife of a Warrant Officer—what does a Brigadier's wife get?—and then listed her personal rations:

8 oz. bacon;	14 oz. sugar;
35 oz. meat;	2 oz. cooking fat;
4 oz. cheese;	14 oz. tinned milk;
9 oz. jam;	3 lb. 8 oz. vegetables;
4 lb. 6 oz. white bread;	3 lb. 8 oz. potatoes;
10 oz. flour;	14 oz. onions;
7 oz. cake;	1 lb. 12 oz. fruit.

It was further stated that she would be able to buy 100 cigarettes a week at 9d. for 20, and a monthly ration of spirits at 6*s*. 6*d*. for gin and 8*s*. 6*d*. for whisky. A theatre, two cinemas and a dance hall are available free of charge, not to mention a lido and five tennis courts. A War Office taxi service costs 2*d*. a mile, if the regular free bus service is *infra dig*. The article ends, "My advice when dealing with Germans is—be friendly but on your dignity." What justification can there be for this sort of luxury in the married quarters at Bad Oeynhausen? From the taxpayer's point of view, it is an outrageous waste of money, and it is grossly unfair that these women of leisure, with no employment except to keep their husbands out of trouble with German girls should be kept in this way at public expense. In the Zone there is a desperate housing shortage and acute under-nourishment. We choose this moment to requisition for soldiers' wives quarters vastly larger than they ever enjoyed before, and to give them a standard of living which no one at home enjoys.

* * *

Sidney Hillman's death came as a sad surprise. Last time I saw him, we discussed the possibility of forming a "third party" in the United States—a project to which he was then strongly opposed. I have sometimes wondered recently whether events would have made him alter his mind. He would have had a key position in any such enterprise. One of the founders of the C.I.O., who kept it steady when John L. Lewis deserted it, he was the most influential organiser of the Political Action Committees which played so large a part in Roosevelt's victory in 1944. He was one of the most constructive minds in the creation of the World Trade Union Congress. He built his own career. Arriving in the United States in 1909 as a poor immigrant from Lithuania, he became an outstanding trade union leader, took over the then chaotic Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union and made it one of the most remarkable labour organisations. He was a shrewd man who knew the technique of acquiring influence. In 1944 he successfully survived a press campaign of vilification remarkably similar to the British press campaign against Laski in 1945.

* * *

Evidence that the strike in the Anglo-Iranian oilfields was "political" and that the Tudeh party was behind it shows that Soviet influence in Persia is not confined to Azerbaijan. How could it be? The population is fantastically poor and exploited by a corrupt Government and by foreign capitalists. In Persia, Britain is identified with Western Big Business. We cannot and should not keep our position in the Middle East by sharing with a decadent feudalism in the exploitation of the common people. CRITIC

THE OFFENCE IS RANK

["The objection to 'The Wicked Lady' was mainly over Miss Lockwood's dress."—Mr. J. Breen, Hollywood Film Censor.]

Whenas in silks My Lady goes,
Then U.S. censors do oppose
The loose arrangement of her clothes.

The female Regency physique,
Though mantled in a mode antique,
Brings blushes to the censor's cheek.

The ban makes Britain wonder why
The mobled Lady can't get by
(So little of her meets the eye)

While dames with hardly any vest
No such concupiscence suggest
As wicked ladies fully dressed,

When ladies practically nude
In California still exude
The sanctity of womanhood.

America's *artistes* may strip
The haunch, the paunch, the thigh, the hip,
And never shake the censorship,

While Britain, straining every nerve
To amplify the export curve,
Strict circumspection must observe.

The gates against the Lady close,
And still in Britain wonder grows,
Because she wears so many clothes.

By what ingenious pretence
Can guardians of innocence
The Lady deem a rank offence?

And why should censors sourly gape
At outworks of the Lady's shape
Which from her fichu may escape?

Our censors keep our films as clean
As any whistle ever seen.
So what is biting Mr. Breen?

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to F. Jenks.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Mr. Pritt (Hammersmith, N., Ind. Lab.) asked how the question of tea stocks was relevant to the debate.

The Speaker said he did not hear what Mr. Pritt said. He thought he was asking about the bread ration. (Laughter.)

Mr. Pritt again asked how the question of tea stocks could be relevant to the order relating to soap.

The Speaker.—Cheese does not seem to have much to do with soap, but some cheese is rather like soap. (Loud laughter.)—*The Times.*

From a good source I learn that Mr. Churchill is in two minds about undertaking the enormous burden of writing the story of the war. From the financial point of view the task makes little or no appeal to him. With taxation what it is he would put very little of the money into his own pocket, for he has made it a rule to declare for income tax purposes every penny that he makes from his writings.—*Nottingham Evening Post.*

The fête was opened by Mrs. O. L. Prior-Palmer, wife of Worthing's M.P.

Mrs. Prior-Palmer told her audience: "Many people are still apt to ask what the Conservatives want so much money for. Money is essential for propaganda. We shall never get the Socialists out of power by waiting for them to make mistakes."—*Worthing Herald.*

Councillor Jacques' plea for the gates of Barwell Recreation Ground to be left open on Sundays received Council approval, but it was decided to chain up the swings lest children be tempted to use them on the Sabbath.—*Hinckley Times and Guardian.*

STRUGGLE FOR AUSTRIA

THIS struggle should not be regarded as a mere subsidiary of the German problem. The Russians are undoubtedly making an all-out bid for the economic and, subsequently, the political control of Austria; the Western Allies, working largely through the Austrian Government, are seeking every opportunity to block this policy. The result is disastrous for the Austrian people and not much less so for the prospects of Big Three harmony.

In one sense Austria is a test case for deciding the possibility of agreement between the East and the West. Ever since the Moscow declaration of 1943 it has been explicitly recognised by the Great Powers that Austrian independence was to be restored and that Austrian democracy, suppressed by Dollfuss and later by the Nazi occupation, was to be given a chance to rise again to its responsibilities. As a result, free elections were held and the Coalition Government of Dr. Figl was recognised by all the Powers. This is a very different situation from that of Germany, where central government and the organism of the State has ceased to exist; and somewhat different from Italy, where the Soviet interest is of a secondary nature. Moreover, the Austrian Socialist Party has revived in a remarkable way and has actually increased its influence during the years of suppression. The combined circumstances of the Moscow declaration, free elections, a strong Socialist Party, and the recognition of the Austrian Government should have provided the most hopeful soil in which Austrian rehabilitation could grow without unreasonable domination by either East or West.

These reasonable hopes have been utterly falsified. Austrian recovery has been painfully slow, the people are, except in parts of the American zone, as hungry as the Germans, zonal frontiers still offer a serious obstacle to the movement of goods, no sort of co-ordinated economic policy can yet develop. In fact, the efforts of the Austrian Government have been frustrated at every turn by disagreement between the Allies on the Control Council and at the Conference table.

Some part of the responsibility for this position must be borne by the Austrian Government. In January of this year it had a magnificent opportunity to play its part in harmonising the conflicting interests of the Allies in this part of the world. The Socialist Party in particular, with its fine record in the past, was in an exceptionally strong position. Entirely acceptable to Britain, it could not be branded by the Russians with any reality as a party of reaction. Above all, the negligible representation of the Communists as a result of the elections has prevented the familiar situation arising where Social Democrats are driven to form a minority opposition to a Communist-controlled coalition. Unfortunately there are few signs that the Government has risen to the occasion. The Russians obviously believe, as do the majority of Austrians, that the orientation of Dr. Figl's Cabinet has been almost entirely Anglo-American. The reasons for this are obvious enough; but, however desirable they may seem on a purely political plane, they take no account of the economic realities. For the economy of Austria cannot be separated from Danubian economy as a whole; and, more specifically, the bulk of the Austrian industrial potential lies in the Soviet zone of occupation. The essential irresponsibility of this dichotomy of outlook on the part of the Government is shown in the very strong economic pressure which is now beginning to be applied by the Soviet Union and which may well lead to the stultifying of the Moscow declaration and the total absorption of Austria into the Eastern bloc, unless the Western Powers, no less than the Austrian Socialists, face up to the reality of the situation.

It is not open to doubt (although the facts in detail are still obscure) that pressure has been put on the Austrian Government since May of this year to enter into bilateral negotiations with the Soviet Union for a trade agreement. The Government's attitude has been that bilateral

negotiations were inappropriate, while disagreement existed between the Allies on the Control Council. This is toeing the Anglo-American line with a vengeance, while the economic condition of the Austrian people remains as low as it is; and the Communists have specifically charged the Government with unnecessarily protracting the agony of Austria by acting as tools of the Western Powers. This accusation is a wild one, but it does give clear expression to the dilemma in which the Austrian Government finds itself.

Against this background the recent storm over the German external assets has blown up. The Soviet decision to impound all German assets in Austria, including those erected with Austrian capital since the Anschluss, is legally inadmissible according to the terms of the Moscow declaration and disregards the fact that 75 per cent. of the whole economy of Austria was compulsorily integrated in the German war-machine between 1938 and 1945. The Anglo-American reply has been to define our interpretation of the Potsdam agreement on this point as covering only German assets in Austria which existed prior to the Anschluss and those which were developed since with German capital. General Clark, the American Commander-in-Chief, has gone so far in the last few days as to hand back to the Austrians certain important German war factories, including the Herman-Göring steel works at Linz. This is a flamboyant gesture, but by itself it has little effect on the situation, and the initiative remains with the Russians, who, by indicating that they are ready to negotiate direct with the Austrian Government on the propriety of their action in any individual case, have effectually achieved their object of bilateral negotiations. And Dr. Figl has now indicated that he has no option but to accept this position.

If the British and Americans are to have a chance of regaining the initiative in Austria, they must take practical steps to resolve Dr. Figl's dilemma and enable him to identify his political predilections with economic necessity. So far there has been plenty of political pressure on Austria to keep out of the Russian embrace; but as suitors the Western Powers have come woefully empty-handed, and the Austrian Government may be forgiven for thinking at long last that a marriage of convenience, distasteful though it be, with Mr. Molotov may have more permanent advantages than love in an attic with Mr. Bevin. It is not worth their while to be used by either party as a pawn in the Danubian game, unless there are solid prizes to be gained.

The Anglo-American attitude to the Danubian shipping held in the United States Zone is typical of the essential weakness of our overtures to S.E. Europe. Fine words about free trade on the Danube are well enough as an expression of pious hope. But in their context they totally disregard the fact that it was just because the Western Powers were not in a position to trade with the Danubian States in the inter-war years that the German penetration of South-East Europe was assured. All these countries look to the Great Powers for help in reconstruction; but if they are offered the choice of help on the same terms which led them to disaster before or the opportunity of joining in a regionally planned economic bloc, the fact that the latter is Soviet-dominated will not deter them from choosing it.

The Soviet position in Austria, as in the other Danubian States, is basically strong, even though the pressure is only beginning to be felt. Moreover, the Soviet motives for desiring Austria within the Eastern bloc are, on economic and even more on strategic grounds, very real ones. Austria is by nature a formidable bastion in the defence of South-East Europe, and no sane man would set out to defend the Austro-Hungarian empire without Austria. In the fact of all this, is it worth our while to seek more effective means of persuading Austria to turn to the West? Opinions will differ about this and there is some substance in the view that the cause is already lost. But at least it should be noticed that the overwhelming majority of Austrians hope that we shall do so, and see in our efforts their best hope of independence. If British foreign policy in Europe is to give all possible support to democratic Socialism, then we should indeed be foolish to ignore Austria.

But such a policy can have no hope of success if it is based on mere obstruction of the Soviet aims. Its only chance of success is if it is based on a genuine effort to secure the economic well-being of the Austrian people and if it leaves the way clear for Soviet co-operation in a common task. To achieve this we must first demonstrate to the Austrian Government that in material terms it will be worth their while to maintain close relations with the West; secondly, the Russians must be persuaded that our interest in Austria is not essentially damaging to them.

There is no reason why we should not begin at once to develop trade relations with Austria. There are important surpluses of raw material available in the British Zone of which the most important to our own economy is timber. Austria can also supply a fairly extensive range of finished and semi-finished goods, with timber and light-engineering products predominating. Moreover the Austrian textile industry could work any raw cotton we were able to import and the plant is adapted to Egyptian cotton. Here is an opportunity for valuable trade which would be in the interests of both countries. There is good reason to suppose that the Austrian Government would welcome a suggestion from us on these lines and no legitimate reason why the Soviet Union should oppose it. But if we are to expect a reasonable attitude from the Russians towards activities of this kind, we must seek to remove some of their genuine grievances. Denazification has been slow and muddled in the British Zone, largely because the British Control Commission has repeatedly interfered with the Austrian Government, who are willing and able to carry out a thorough purge. Some 440,000 displaced persons in Western Austria are also a source of friction. No doubt Mr. Molotov's heated words at Paris are an exaggeration, but little effective effort has been made to screen the D.P.s and remove the undesirables. This is a complicated operation, but it is one which the Russians may legitimately demand in the interests of a peaceful Austria and their own security. The sooner these two problems are resolutely faced, the better for Anglo-Soviet relations and the better for Austria.

JOHN FREEMAN

SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

A SCIENCE repertory season is in progress. It began a month ago with the arrival of "star" scientists from Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and the Colonies for the Empire Scientific Conference, promoted by the Royal Society. After a week in London the all-star caste went on tour, first to Cambridge; then to Oxford, putting on non-stop shows morning, afternoon and night; then back to London for a joint production with the British Association. Then most of them changed their roles, put on mental pin-stripes and became Government delegates at the Official Commonwealth Conference. During the past week they have been reinforced by guest-stars from 37 countries, including Russia, and from "No Country" in the person, thus introduced, of the 88-year-old distinguished German scientist, Max Planck, for the celebration of the Isaac Newton Tercentenary. Fresh arrivals are coming in for the International Conference on Nuclear Physics at Cambridge next week, followed by an Atomic Conference. Add the annual meeting of the British Association this week-end and a B.A. conference on Universities next Thursday. Simultaneously, we have had the meetings of the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, in London, discussing the scope and programme of its activities to be presented to the full Conference in November.

After the delegates had said very firmly that science which abominates secrecy must not be discussed behind closed doors, the Empire Scientific Conference was thrown open—even the informal discussions, after-hours, at Cambridge and Oxford. The fact that there was virtually no reference to the atomic-bomb had nothing to do with M.I.5; it was merely irrelevant to the fundamental problems of nuclear energy, which were under discussion. Uranium fission is a back number to academic scientists. Breaking down heavy atoms to release energy is so much cruder than the processes of the sun which releases the energy by building up the lighter elements. And anyway, scientists want to know a great deal about the nature of the nucleus which they split open, and they want to develop methods of producing artificially heavier and heavier particles. That is why they crowded the discussion on cosmic rays, those particles which constantly bombard the earth from Space—some say from the sun and the stars; others from the Space between the stars. We heard a lot from Prof. J. D. Cockroft, the head of the Government Atomic Research and Development Station at Harwell, and others about the mammoth and costly machines which are being built in this country to try to produce such particles. And about Professor Blackett's plans for flying laboratories, stratosphere aircraft, intercepting the cosmic rays and from that brilliant young Indian, Professor H. J. Bhabha, about the experiments which he has already done at that height above the Equator at 40,000 feet.

Most of the formal discussions, however, were concerned with more earthbound problems. Science is prolific in new discoveries and new ideas but it is short of trained nursemaids and there are no crèches. As we know to our bitter cost, the foundling-discoveries get pretty rough usage. The burden of knowledge presses hard on the scientists, in two senses. They cannot keep abreast of it themselves. Over 40,000 regular scientific publications exist in the world. In the flood, experts cannot cope even with the relevant material in their own fields. So the Conference urged a Commonwealth Abstracting Service, which will see to it that selectively a scientist-worker can keep in touch. (UNESCO wants preferably an international service.) The second sense in which they are burdened is in knowing what should be done, the risks of what is already being done and the dangers in their own discoveries, and being unable to do anything about it through shortage of trained personnel.

For example, the wastage of human life and the amount of human suffering among the backward races is terrific. Tropical peoples are ridden with diseases which the new drugs, the antibiotics (like penicillin), the sulphanomides (like M. & B.) and the antimalarials (like paludrine) and the new insecticides (like DDT and gamexane) can reduce or eliminate. But there are not enough trained personnel to undertake these measures. And anyway there are other complications. It is inhuman to save men's lives from disease only to allow them to perish of hunger, as they certainly would if, in surviving and multiplying, they had to exist on their present food supplies, their sparse crops, their starving pastures and their lean animals. So it means grappling with all the conditions at once—soil-fertility, animal-breeding, plant-breeding, new industries (since, as witness India, a teeming rural population cannot subsist on fractionated acreages) and the prevention of soil erosion through excessive cultivation. We need more and more ecologists to study the fabric of human environment.

Or, to take another example, diseases latent or under control in one area (yellow fever in tropical Africa) can flourish and run amok in another. Air travel has brought a new menace—the disease-carrying insect which stows away and is in a new area within a few hours. Scientists know all the dangers and, during the war, when airfields were laid down in endemic disease areas, the Fighting Services could take, with unlimited means and rigorous discipline, the necessary measures. Now the Service experts

have gone. The local Governments have not the resources of manpower and money to maintain the expensive schemes needed to "sterilise" huge airfields. And civil airlines are concerned only with the convenience of their passengers. The Conference called for an international organisation to be established under Uno to control vaccination and inoculation, secure uniform certification and supervise the airports, aircraft and ships. This, it was pointed out, would mean heavy recruitment and training of experts.

The shortage of scientists is greatest in the Colonies; but, with big expansion programmes in every part of the Empire, the demand far exceeds the present capacities of the educational institutions. The Dominions have always looked for reinforcements from the U.K. and to a great deal of fundamental research being done for them here. Now there will have to be an Empire Training Scheme with a scholarship system enabling free exchange of students and graduates between all parts, and a co-operative network of research throughout the Commonwealth. And they will have to produce new types of scientists to meet changing needs and emphasis. For instance, the experiment of the Commonwealth Scientific Offices in various capitals, so highly successful during the war, is to be continued and extended. These were teams of Empire scientists, each an expert in a different branch of science and each representing his particular country for special purposes but all of them working as a team, forming a cross-section of science. Then there are scientific liaison officers and scientific attachés required for Embassies and the needs of UNESCO with its proposed regional offices, and of all the other U.N. Organisations, Food and Agriculture, Health, I.L.O., etc., which need scientific personnel. They have to train and recruit a Diplomatic Service for Science.

While the Empire Scientific Conference was very much a family party, the scientists attending it were most insistent that everything they decided and did should be correlated to full international organisation. They endorsed Dr. Julian Huxley's proposals, as Executive Secretary of UNESCO Preparatory Commission, that the International Scientific Unions should be strengthened and used. These Unions (academic, not trade) cover most branches of science, promoting special inquiries and research and organising congresses. The scientists welcomed, too, UNESCO plans for setting up "pilot research stations" in various parts of the world, designed to fill gaps in knowledge, encourage by example or provide special facilities for a region. (For instance, it is proposed that there should be a mechanised "World Brain," a centre fitted with the latest mathematical computors which can work out, automatically in a few seconds, sums and equations which would take human mathematicians days or weeks. It is suggested that it should be in India).

Lastly, the scientists have recognised that there must be a scientifically enlightened public. Unless the people and through them Parliaments and Governments understand the implications of science, it will continue to be mishandled and an increasing menace instead of being applied beneficially for the advancement of human well-being. The British Association, to this end, has been asked to organise a Bureau of Scientific Information for the service of the Press, Radio and Films. It will be a clearing-house for scientific facts and will form a liaison between the "media" and the scientific specialists and institutions. It is appropriate that the British Association should be asked to undertake this task because it was founded in 1831 to promote general interest in science and "remove obstacles from the path of scientific advance." In more leisurely times it fulfilled that function through its annual meetings, which attracted a great deal of public attention and "hit the headlines." But to-day it has to adapt itself to the day-to-day requirements. It has to provide the irrigation canals for the flood of scientific knowledge.

RITCHIE CALDER

"THE RAPE OF LUCRETIA"

BETWEEN Benjamin Britten and the average "good composer" of our day a gulf yawns. *The Rape of Lucretia* may not be a flawless masterpiece, but it is a work of genius, not of talent: among a crowd of eminent commoners the royal blood is unmistakable. This distinction in rank is of capital importance, and transcends any doubts and qualifications which may arise as we consider the new opera in detail. One difference between Britten and most of his contemporaries is that, in the process of composition, his imaginative "inner ear" is listening, all the time and at full stretch, to what he is doing; fascinating as his music looks on paper—for he is a master of figuration and of every kind of musical device—I feel tolerably sure that his ideas never occur to him as anything but sheer sensuous sound, and that it is to this fact that they owe the force and freshness with which they strike the listener's ear.

The libretto of *The Rape of Lucretia*, which is by Ronald Duncan, acknowledges a debt to five authors besides to André Obey; but anybody who recalls the performances of *Le Viol de Lucrèce* by the Compagnie des Quinze will recognise Obey's play as the principal source of the plot. In particular, Duncan and Britten have borrowed—and with splendid musico-dramatic justification—the device of a pair of commentators, male and female, framing the tragedy on either side of the stage: ideal spectators outside time, who interpret and universalise the action, occasionally anticipate it, and exhibit affinities both with the classical Greek chorus and with Hardy's Spirits of the Pities and the Years. The action is divided into two acts, each of two scenes. In the first we see the generals carousing in their camp some distance from Rome—the noble Collatinus, Lucretia's husband; the jealous Junius, whose wife (like many another) had been proved faithless on the previous night; and the lustful Prince of Rome, Tarquinius Sextus. An interlude describes Tarquin's ride to Rome, and the second scene presents Lucretia spinning with her women, the late arrival of Tarquin, his demand for hospitality and the misgivings of the women masked by their ceremonious "good-night." The first scene of the second act, in Lucretia's bedroom, culminates in Tarquin's quenching of the candle; and the final scene shows the arrival of Junius and Collatinus the following morning, followed by Lucretia's suicide in their presence.

The libretto, with its taut structure, its lyrical episodes and its few but clearly defined characters, is well adapted to the purpose of music. But it contains one or two questionable features. For example, the commentators are saddled with a certain amount of historical exposition which is unnecessary and distracting. In setting these passages to *recitativo secco* Britten has shown prodigious skill in the management of intractable material, but not even he can reconcile us to the opening of the second act. Here the librettist deliberately adopts the style of an encyclopaedia, putting into the mouth of the Female Chorus such phrases as "All authorities agree that the Etruscan conquest of Rome dates from 600 B.C.—that is, approximately." At this point the audience giggles—and is presumably meant to; but why, why, why? I implore librettist and composer to make the simple cut which would remove this blot on the integrity and keeping of their work.

A larger problem is posed by the final interpretation of the tragedy in terms of the Christian faith. In spite of the majestic and consoling musical structure upon which this transformation is accomplished, I cannot help thinking it to be an artistic error. The incompatibility of Lucretia's story, culminating in a "noble" suicide, with the ideas of Christendom emerges all too clearly in the episode in which the "Christianising" Choruses attempt to restrain Collatinus from the impulse to "forgive" Lucretia. There is a whole world of confusion here. A Roman might pity Lucretia, but he would no more "forgive" her than one "forgives" a tablecloth for an ugly stain: whereas to the Christian not only does forgiveness rank among the highest virtues, but there can be in this particular instance nothing to forgive.

This second act contains musical and dramatic beauties of the highest order; among them the moving C major *lullaby* sung by the Female Chorus to the sleeping Lucretia, the approach of Tarquin announced by the Male Chorus in a whispered *parlando* accompanied by muffled, stealthy drum-beats; and the whole of the last scene, from the lyrical *aubade* with which it opens to the measured catharsis of its close. But the act is a little flawed by the incongruities I have mentioned; and in particular by the curious failure to make a great musical climax of the central episode of the story—a failure which is part of the price paid for the introduction of the Christian *motif*. One does not, of course, demand a crude Straussian representation of the lustful crime, but the violence of rape must surely be matched by some sort of musical violence, and I cannot think that this was the moment to launch the two commentators on a figured chorale.

The first act, however, is an unquestionable masterpiece; a great arc of tension stretches over the whole hour of its course. As soon as the inner curtain reveals the silent camp beneath the heavy, thunderous night (and you can imagine how John Piper's brush reinforces the atmosphere!), we perceive that with eleven solo instruments and percussion Britten can command effects even more intense and evocative than those of *Peter Grimes*. Everything is magically, classically clear: the moments of lyrical melody captivate, the harmony moves in that absolutely logical manner which was so marked in the Second String Quartet, and the instrumentation is a chain of ravishing subtleties. In spite of the slender resources, the effect is anything but small; here and there we are even reminded of Britten's enormous admiration for Verdi. But it would be absurd to describe the music as derivative; on the contrary, it is all unmistakably in that style which we have come to know and love as Britten's own—the heart-easing melody of friendship given later in the first scene to Collatinus, the tremendous excitement of the Ride to Rome (above all the wonderful moment when horse and rider plunge glowing into the Tiber), the lovely *ensemble* for the women as the linen is folded away, and the solemnity, tinged by foreboding, of the long chain of "good-nights" which bring the incomparable act to a close. At this point, a humble gratitude dims the listener's eye: beauty has been draining out of the world for so many years, and here comes a little more of the precious fluid to replenish the emptying cup. As Hans Sachs said of Walther's Trial Song, *es klang so alt, und war doch so neu!*

The first two performances were both conducted by Ernest Ansermet, with perfect musicianship and in particular, a most delicate realisation of the piano accompaniments to the recitatives. The two casts, however, were entirely different, though in each case *ensemble* and attention to detail were of the standard one has come to expect of Glyndebourne. Peter Pears and Aksel Schiotz alternate as Male Chorus: Pears's ringing and impassioned declamation ranks among the finest things he has done, while Schiotz, who is a Dane, deserves special commendation for the clarity and purity of his English. Joan Cross and Flora Nielsen vie with one another in the excellence of their interpretations of the Female Chorus. Neither Tarquin, however, is altogether ideal: Otakar Kraus, who looks magnificent, because of the pronounced "beat" in his powerful baritone; Frank Rogier, who has a brighter, smoother voice, because of his inexperience as an actor. Of the two Lucretias, Kathleen Ferrier looks the more Roman, but her fine contralto has a touch of oratorio-plum-in-the-mouth from which Nancy Evans is wholly free. Among the smaller parts (none is really small) I must mention the floating, silvery high notes of Margaret Ritchie's Lucia, Owen Brannigan's richly sung Collatinus, and the Junius of Edmund Donlevy, impeccable both musically and dramatically. Eric Crozier's production and John Piper's scenery raise the dramatic tension as surely as they delight the eye; how strange that we should have had to wait all this time to see a stage decorated by so evidently dramatic a painter! It is good news that the whole production is to tour this country (at Sadler's Wells from August 28th to September 21st) and thereafter the Continent, for it is of a quality of which we may well feel proud in any capital in the world.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

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RADIO NOTES

INTO his Faustus Marlowe may reasonably be supposed to have put much of himself. Exulting in the lurid arrogance of his own cleverness, this brilliant but disagreeable man could not realise that the individual can do everything but liberate himself: that freeing, which is sometimes called redemption, must come from someone—or something—outside him. So the actor interpreting this coloratura role must somehow convey a bewildering mixture of high poetic apprehension, mental arrest, sadism, childish extremes of feeling, vanity and moral cowardice. Unlike Goethe's and Busoni's heroes, who knew—at any rate intellectually—what they were in for, Marlowe's Faustus, like a sly little boy who has often cheated with impunity, did not really believe in the validity of the pact. He thought he'd get out of it somehow, in the end. "Tush! these are trifles and mere old wives' tales," he exclaims jauntily; and a little later, with the self-dramatising instinct of the twister; "Be I a devil, yet God may pity me." All this was admirably spoken by Alec Guinness, who possesses a beautiful voice and a sensitive control of theatrical dynamics; but when God failed to act as the indulgent parent and pity was not forthcoming, I felt this actor to be something less than completely successful.

On the other hand, the intelligence of Mr. Guinness's assumption in general would be difficult to exceed: his delineation of each image (what a bookish writer Marlowe was!), his timing, his unemphatic making of every point, were beyond praise. I wish I could say the same of Laidman Browne's Mephistophilis. This actor never lacks gusto, and sometimes his radio performances have a genuine bravura that is most enlivening; but in this part I thought (*pace* some of my colleagues) that the limelit wickedness of his tones was monotonous and ill-judged. The choice of Handel's music will have seemed odd to some ears; personally I was not conscious of incongruity, although there were a few occasions when I felt the words hardly needed a musical backing. This is not a play in which the visual element matters (although, I suppose, an elaborate stage presentation of it could be successful), and Felix Felton showed good taste in the plainness of his production. But why introduce a flat narrator's voice saying: "A grove by night," when the music—and afterwards Faustus himself—describes the scene for us? Yet when all is said this remains a broadcast of which Drama has reason to be proud.

Miss Rosalie Glynn-Grylls and Mr. Arthur Calder Marshall, who, under the chairmanship of Gerald Bullett, conducted a friendly wrangle about the right attitude to biography, said a number of stimulating things. But the trouble about this kind of broadcast is that nobody gets a chance to state his own case *completely*; red herrings are frequent and very pungent; and the real crux of the situation tends to escape notice. In this case Mr. Calder Marshall judged "fictional" biography by its artistic success; while Miss Glynn-Grylls clung to demonstrable facts. In the course of the argument a passage from Lytton Strachey's *Elizabeth and Essex*, which guessed at what was passing in the queen's mind at a dramatic moment in the story, was held up to obloquy by both sides. Yet it is obvious from the context that his passage is conjectural: what Miss Glynn-Grylls calls facts are not involved; but everyone—even the chairman—seemed in too much of a hurry to notice this. Surely the most important point—which might have been brought out by a single speaker, weighing all sides of the question—is that the really fatal method consists in presenting fiction as if it were documented evidence—in fact the kind of writing purveyed by the late Philip Guedalla, whose flash style I was glad to hear explicitly condemned by Mr. Calder Marshall. Compared with such deliberate wickedness, the distortion achieved by selecting from facts is only relatively misleading.

In contrast to the inconclusive effect of this type of parlour game, Mr. John Lawrence's talk on Asiatic Russia (July 8) was altogether more convincing. Unlike some recent talks on the U.S.S.R. this one was neither vague nor lyrical: it was factual yet vividly interesting, friendly yet detached. One was thankful for the opportunity to form one's own opinion of the speaker's judgment, unsolicited by the perky interruptions of an artificial objector.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*Sunday, July 21st.* Concert (2.30); Recital (6.15); William Cobbett (7 p.m.).

Monday. Recital (2 p.m.); From the Thames to the Lark (7.45 p.m.); A Month in the Country (9.15).

Tuesday. Cecil Rhodes (L.P. 10 a.m.); Shedrin (V. S. Pritchett, 11.3 p.m.).

Wednesday. Book Talk (Brian Vesey-FitzGerald, 6.20 p.m.); Hassan (7.30 and 9.30 p.m.).

Friday. In the Divorce Courts (6.20 p.m.); Bernard Shaw (9.15 p.m.); So this is Marriage (9.30 p.m.).

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"Fifty Years of Films," at Dorland Hall
"Men of Two Worlds," at the Gaumont and the Marble Arch Pavilion

At Dorland Hall in Lower Regent Street there is an exhibition, *Fifty Years of Films*, arranged by the *Daily Express*. I dropped in during the heat-wave. Very brightly set out, in the modern manner, were such objects as the zoetrope, Lumière's original projector, peepshows from piers. By degrees one arrived sweating at a modern film studio. I never got as far, being caught by a bowler-hatted showman half-way, who roared us into the kinema with benches and a rainy screen. While a young lady played the piano, we saw coming towards us the express train that once stampeded audiences: it would take two trains colliding head on to stir us similarly to-day. We enjoyed some slapstick, the capture of Charles Peace, a fashion parade at Folkestone, and wound up with Chaplin in *The Champ* (1913). Nothing wistful about boots and cane; week after week he accomplished marvels on the rink, slipped between coppers' ankles, took and gave stunning blows. What were the other ecstasies of those days? John Bunny comedy. The Pearl White serials. Silent Shakespeare (I recall an exceedingly glum *Hamlet*, done for the sake of the Ghost). *Quo Vadis?* and *She*. Bike chases through china shops; carnivals of flour; cross-eyed Turpin; Nazimova; Fatty Arbuckle; seaside belles jumping back from hurried waves. My sharpest memories are of Tschaikovsky played and repeated during a tragic circus scene; of a man blowing a car uphill to illustrate the lung-swelling properties of Standard Bread. Of course I enjoyed everything, even the advertisements for prams and funerals. I meant, when I grew up, to be a chain-smoking pianist in a Biograph: for the theatre, with its escorts and dressings-up, I gave, comparatively, not a damn. O Pearl White! O rare Ben Turpin!

Men of Two Worlds. Disappointing story of a Negro composer who goes back to his native Tanganyika and finds a tribal life still swayed by magic. The theme of nearly all such films—witch-doctor versus dispensary—is trotted out here again, without either the beautiful observation of *The Forgotten Village* or the local interest of Russian outposts in Asia and the Arctic Circle. The background of village life (in very uneven Technicolor) never quite convinces, while the chief characters remain figments from an argument. Mr. Eric Portman and Miss Phyllis Calvert seem to keep wonderfully cool in the hottest sun—especially the latter who, as a bush doctor, threads her way among the sweating natives to display pastel-shades in slacks. The Negroes—Mr. Robert Adams as the composer and Mr. Orlando Martins as the witch-doctor—manage considerably better; but only at rare moments does the drama come alive. The one touch of imagination shown by Mr. Thorold Dickinson and his collaborators has been in making the hero a musician and in getting Mr. Arthur Bliss to compose

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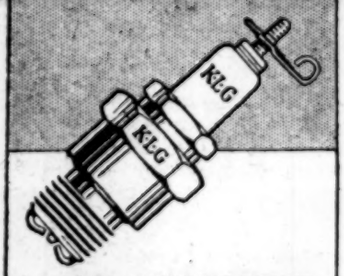

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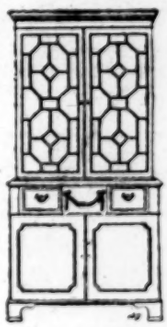

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a score round native themes. Some of these choruses and the nervous invisible dance of fingers on drums provide the chief consolation for a film that means well enough but has gone lengthily and timidly astray.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS

"Man and Superman," at The Arts Theatre
"For Services Rendered," at The New Lindsey

If you are old enough for your brain to have had its first reconditioning from the books of Bernard Shaw; if Shaw is therefore part of the material of your mind, you will find it difficult to talk objectively about any of the five major plays which make up the great pentateuch of Shaw's older testament. To see *Man and Superman* is like revisiting the university of one's youth, and I see that my old copy of *Man and Superman*, with a tinge of dankness added to that famous cool green, is covered with as many pencil marks as an old school-book.

The Arts Theatre is showing the dream sequence of the play, as a suitable tribute to the author at this time. Earlier audiences, well-made connoisseurs of the well-made play, could not stand this ninety-minute interval in the middle of Act III, when all "action" was allowed to stop while the principal characters got on to their perches to tell each other what the play was about. *Man and Superman* has therefore commonly been acted without its best scene. Is it because we have learnt to appreciate Shaw that we reverse the process and act Juan in Hell all by itself?

The masterpiece came delightfully fresh to the audience at the Arts. They heard the famous speeches, if they are famous, so long, and yet so perfectly sprung and balanced that they can be tossed off by a competent actor with the ease of a Donnelly scoring a century at Lords'. They realised the marvel of compression which makes minutes pass like seconds, the joy of hearing argument stripped of emotion and self-deception, the true drama of the contest between the characters of Mendoza-Mephistopheles and Don Juan-Tanner, between the sentimental Devil, who, "in spite of an effusion of good nature and friendliness, is peevish and sensitive when his advances are not reciprocated," and the Protagonist, who sings not Arms and the Man, nor even Art and the Individual, but the philosophic man, who like Walt Whitman's "Answerer," *replies*, with his whole personality, to the world, and the arguments, opposed to him. Mr. John Slater most exactly interprets Shaw's picture of the Devil, on true romantic tenor lines. Mr. Clunes if he lacks perhaps point something per cent. of Don Juan's central hardness, could scarcely speak the glorious lines more eloquently, nor more melodiously.

My brain, refreshingly irrigated by early-middle-period Shaw at the Arts, was quickly clogged up again at the New Lindsey, by equally early Maugham. In *For Services Rendered*, a huge theme, the fact of post-war frustration and the collapse of romantic idealism, receives frank treatment in a series of emotional situations which are basically insincere. Mr. Maugham cannot write an uninteresting play, yet it is possible to be absorbed and bored at the same time, if the suspense continues to wind and unwind with the regularity of clockwork. The play is worth seeing as a document of the mid-twenties, and contains at least three interesting performances, particularly that of Kenneth Buckley, as the earthy type who longs for 1939, when the war will begin all over again.

STEPHEN POTTER

PICTURES

At 16b Grafton Street are to be seen, alas by artificial light, the nine paintings by Stubbs from Wentworth Woodhouse, kindly lent by Lord Fitzwilliam in aid of a charity. They are superb: the frieze of brood-mares and foals and the frieze of fox hounds must indeed be placed among the most remarkable products of the English School. Inspired like the Quattrocento Florentines by a passion for anatomy, Stubbs possessed, like them, a powerful and, unlike them, apparently untrained, sense of design, without which all his dissecting would have been artistically fruitless. These pictures suggest indeed that as a designer he has been excelled by none of his compatriots.

Elsewhere there are the usual miscellanies. Rowland, Browse and Delbanco call their show "Currents of Post-Impressionism in France and England," but the term is perhaps more useful if confined to the elder painters and their followers to the exclusion of the neo-romantics like Sutherland and of the surrealists. William Scott's picture, revealing concentration upon form alone, is a genuinely Post-Impressionist work. The Rousseau, which we have not seen before, reveals none of his genius, but the exhibition includes some interesting pictures. The Redfern has over seven hundred works, among them a huge terrifying and impressive Francis Bacon. The Beaux Arts has a pleasant collection ranging from David Cox to Vanessa Bell, and it may be noted that some of the prices are very inviting to the collector with a small purse. The newly opened Gallery of Fine Arts, 98 Sydney Street, Chelsea, mingles pottery with sculpture and painting.

Correspondence

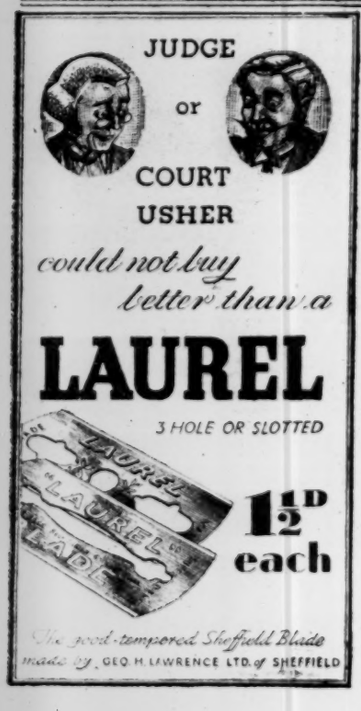
TYROL

Sir,—Mr. Ellison's letter on the question of South Tyrol helps to confirm still further the suspicion that "Alto Adige" is to remain in Italian hands for no other substantial reason than that of the undeniable Germanness of its inhabitants.

A precarious and ultimately unworkable independence has been restored to Austria on the grounds of a believed ethnic difference between Austrians and Germans. In fact this does not exist. Saxony or Bavaria, for instance, is neither more nor less German than is Austria, and each is about equally entitled to as much real independence as that which has been granted to Austria. It is doubtful whether Austria will find her "independence" more comfortable than she did between 1918 and 1938.

If a large part of South Tyrol is a "hot-bed of Nazism," the explanation is to be found in the fact that the whole of Austria, far more than Prussia, is the true birth-place both of pan-Germanism and of Nazism. In this connection Mr. Fodor's book, *The Revolution is On*, with its wealth of information on the origins of National Socialism, is worth reading. The Prussian elements in Nazism should not obscure in our eyes the recognition that the late Axis was an attempt to restore a former Italo-German and Catholic condominium of Europe, in the shape of the so-called "Holy *Roman* Empire of the *German* People." The tendency of Italy and Germany to coalesce against the rationalism of Western Europe—and such historical tendencies die very hard—will not be destroyed by the creation of a buffer state in Austria. Austria will eventually be absorbed either by one or by the other. But a more immediate cause of the convinced pan-German opinions of South Tyrol's people is surely to be found in the economic suffering brought to her people by twenty years of a completely uneconomic enforced independence.

For the purposes of perpetuating the myth—it is no more—that Austrians and Germans are as different from one another as are, say, Germans and Czechs, or Germans and Poles, we are apparently prepared to partition Austria off from Germany. When, however, our independent Austria requests the return of South Tyrol, we awaken to awareness that the latter is Austrian territory, and that, by granting Austria's request we should in fact be enlarging a German country at the expense of friendly Italy. It is surely obvious that an *Anschluss* will again be concluded very soon after the final departure



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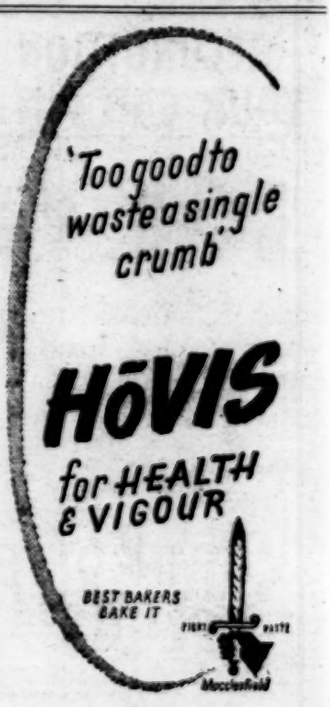

of Allied troops from Germany, so that we should in fact be helping to re-establish a greater *Grossdeutschland*. Surely such a policy, if it is our policy (and all the evidence suggests that it is), is not only stupid, but immoral. And one can apply the same adjectives to Mr. Ellison's demand that we should punish the Tyrolese for their Nazism (which he clearly regards as incurable) by continuing their subjection to the Italians. If we wish to create a democratic Germany and an equally democratic Austria, it is sheer folly to begin on the basis of a facile equation of German and/or Austrian national consciousness, in all its manifestations, with Nazism. For what, at bottom, has Nazism necessarily to do with the concepts "Germany" and "Austria"? It is a phenomenon that can arise, as we are at last beginning to discover, in any country. It is hypocritical folly to attempt to teach the Germans, and the Austrians, that they must forthwith adhere to a supra-national ideal wherein we, their late enemies, have as yet manifestly little faith. K. T. DUFFIELD

Brighton.

MORALS AND POLITICS

SIR,—You complain that "Communists defend evils in the U.S.S.R. as being right, if they are committed by the State."

Putting aside the difficulty of establishing the facts (as to which much might be written, the lie being still, as Lassalle said, a European Power), the answer to your charge is that Communists see contemporary politics as part of a global class struggle in which, by the mere fact of becoming Communists, they have chosen their side and mean to stick to it.

The possibility of a world at peace (a thing of which in our lifetime we have had no experience) depends, in the Communist view, on the victory of the workers in that struggle. From that basic premise all else follows.

You Social Democratic intellectuals swither to and fro with every blast of propaganda and get nowhere. Unstable as water, you shall not excel!

Read your history, Sir. 150 years ago the French Revolution created exactly the sort of cleavage in the world which the Russian Revolution has created in our time, except that the issue then was not working class, but merely bourgeois progress. Suppose there had been a NEW STATESMAN AND NATION in England between 1789 and 1793. We should have had something like this:

1789. *N.S. & N.* deplores bloodshed attending fall of Bastille, but hopes Mr. Pitt will not listen to the reactionary clamour for intervention.

1790. *N.S. & N.* gives page review to Burke's *Reflections*. While not agreeing with all that Mr. Burke says, *N.S. & N.* remarks that friendship with France is made peculiarly difficult by the loathsome servility with which Mr. Paine and his friends stand by France, right or wrong.

1791. *N.S. & N.* deplores provocative diplomacy of the Powers at Pilnitz, and trusts Mr. Pitt will remember that he is a Minister pledged to reform and that Britain's chief interest is peace.

1792. *N.S. & N.* remarks that the events of August 10th and the September Massacres raise grave doubts whether Jacobin mentality has ever understood or will ever understand the Anglo-Saxon way of life. Nevertheless *N.S. & N.* hopes that Mr. Pitt, etc., etc.

1793. War breaks out between Britain and the French Republic. *N.S. & N.* observes that this would not have happened if Mr. Pitt had kept his head and if the Jacobins had understood, etc., etc., etc.

But the war went on just the same, and lasted 22 years. ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON

Bournemouth.

SIR,—May I be allowed a few lines in which to reply to the three points made by Mr. Harold Binns? (1) A statement vaguely attributed to "Vatican sources" is not evidence, even when it appears in the *Manchester Guardian*. What *is* evidence, however, is the following remark of Cardinal Griffin, made at the Dominican Church, Camden Town, on July 7th: "Join a party—Labour, Liberal, Conservative—anything except the Communist Party." That, surely, confirms what I wrote in my previous letter. (2) I should want to know more about Mr. Binn's *Brief and Simple Explanation of the Catholic Catechism* before accepting that as evidence. There is no treatment of political philosophy in any of the Catechisms with which I am familiar. (3) I think Mr. Binns must have brought in the Runnymede affair for controversial effect. It is beside the point.

Southampton. GORDON SEWELL

SIR,—Arising out of Mr. Harold Binns' letter, may I indicate, so far as is possible in brief space, the full Vatican theory as to politics? It is readily available in various Encyclicals issued during the last hundred years, but especially subsequently to the Vatican Council of 1870. Pope Leo XIII (1878–1903) was an especially frequent writer of those documents, and he and his successors have covered practically the whole ground of sociology.

The basic principles come to this: There are two powers, the Church and the State, each supreme in its own sphere, but there should be concord between them, or, in matters of common interest, the State should defer to the Church; the State should establish the Catholic religion, as "alone true"; toleration of non-Catholic cults is an evil, to be permitted only so far as circumstances make necessary; Socialism, Communism, Anarchism, Freemasonry, and all forms of Totalitarianism, are contrary to the Catholic faith; Liberalism (in the sense of separation of Church and State, and modern "secularist" ideas) is also condemned; marriage and education should be subject to ecclesiastical oversight; democracy "is an allowable form of government provided the doctrines of the Church are safeguarded."

The principle Encyclicals dealing with these subjects are: Leo XIII: *Inscrutabili* (1878); *Arcanum Divinae* (1880); *Immortale Dei* (1885); *Libertas* (1888); *Sapientiae Christianae* (1888); *Rerum Novarum* (1891); Pius X: *Fin dalla Prima* (1903); Benedict XV: *Pacem Dei* (1920); Pius XI: *Quadragesimo* (1931); Pius XII; *Sertum Laetitiae* (1939).

It is not my design to indict (or to defend) these theories, but merely to indicate their nature. There is much of value in them on social reform; but it is always needful to remember that the Church's ideal is based on her conception of herself as teaching infallible truth by divine right. J. W. POYNTER

MODEL DEMOCRACIES AND WHY

SIR,—I have done my best to grasp the relevance of Mr. Cadbury's letter but failed. In view of my failure, I cannot resist the temptation to ask him; (i) What the desires of the Swedes have to do with the matter? The Swedes, he says, want more children. Quite so; but, like anybody else, they may want what is bad for them. The English also want more children, but that does not mean that more children would conduce to the welfare of the country. (ii) What, in any event, the case of Sweden has from this point of view to do with that of England? Sweden, with a much greater area, has a population of less than 7 million; England and Wales, 42 million. It may quite well be the case that it is desirable for the population of Sweden to grow and of England and Wales to diminish; if we only had 7 million people, I should welcome an increase in the birth rate. (iii) What Marshal Pétain has to do with me? In so far as Marshal Pétain stood for anything at all he stood for "family," i.e., presumably, more children. I want fewer children. Why, then, should my views "be approved by . . . the disciples of Marshal Pétain"? C. E. M. JOAD

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SCHOOLS AND CINEMAS

SIR,—It is depressing to think that the revelations by Critic's friend of the extreme slowness with which blitzed schools in the Midlands are being repaired could be repeated up and down the country. It is not, however, to lengthen the list of such woes that I write, but to make a practical suggestion.

Since the Minister of Education, as Miss Wilkinson asserts, is powerless to direct a single painter, still less a bricklayer, to work on school building; and since, as Critic asserts, and as the facts demonstrate, she has so little success in persuading her Ministerial colleagues to give school building a high priority, let the Government invite a body of men to take over the whole business of school building and repairs who have demonstrated already that they can do what the Ministry of Education cannot. I mean the cinema industry.

Consider this Borough of Twickenham. We have the usual housing troubles and the schools are, in many cases, antiquated, dilapidated and overcrowded. In the centre of the town, where two cinemas already flourished, a third, which had been closed during the war, was briskly reopened soon after V-Day, with apparently no delay over labour or materials. The film studios at Teddington, which received a direct hit from a flying-bomb, are now undergoing repairs costing many thousands of pounds and will, it is announced, be ready by the end of the year.

A similar tale of successful recovery from war wounds could doubtless be told in other areas. In the current issue of your paper a great cinema circuit reports increased profits of £100,000, and increase of dividend from 20 per cent. to 25 per cent. and makes no complaint of "cinema shortage" due to building, labour or any other difficulties.

Clearly, these are the people to rebuild our schools. Let the Government ask them to get on with the job.

J. J. SULLIVAN

21 The Green, Twickenham.

THE GOATS OF BIKINI

SIR,—Why does the compiler of "This England" column put in his satirical pillory the action of some people in Carlisle who prayed for the four thousand imprisoned animals in the atom bomb experiment? If the people of Carlisle or anywhere else could have done something more active to stop that cowardly business—an appalling example of what happens when the military and the scientific mind, both without scruple or human decency, make common cause—their action in merely praying about it might well have been derided. But in the circumstances what recourse had those who feel deeply in the matter of our suffering fellow creatures but to invoke a merciful God? Why should they be held up to the laughter of your readers by a pagan columnist? I cannot help wishing that your paper had existed in "This Palestine" in the time of Christ or in "This Italy" in the time of Francis of Assisi. What rollicking excerpts your column would have contained then.

1 New Court, HARRY COOPER
Lincoln's Inn, W.C.2.

SOCIALIST STUDENTS

SIR,—The letter published in your issue of the 6th inst. by Messrs. Lowy, Marris and Tyler, calling for a national organisation for British Socialist students, came as something of a surprise to those of us who have been long associated with the British student movement.

There has been in existence for the last twenty-six years such an organisation, formerly the University Labour Federation, now Student Labour Federation. Many of your readers will be familiar with the work and achievements of the S.L.F. It now has four thousand members and forty-six affiliated sections, covering practically every university and university college in the United Kingdom, as well as some of the technical and training colleges. Through its work in the British Student Movement the S.L.F. has been generally recognised as the body to represent British Socialist students at a national and international level. During the war it maintained close contact with student organisations in the free countries and with refugee organisations. Since the end of the war this contact has increased, and now covers all student organisations in the democratic countries of the world. The S.L.F. was represented on the British delegation to the World Youth Conference, held in London last November, and has a member sitting on the Council of the new World Federation of Democratic Youth. It has also done much valuable work in preparing for the setting up of a world students' organisation.

Endeavours have been made in the past, by a minority of Socialist students, to form local or national organisations. But due to the strong feeling of the mass of Socialist students in favour of student unity, these have always ended in retreat. Such attempts have nothing but an adverse effect on the general student movement of this country, and also seriously weaken the prestige and influence of British Socialist students among their comrades in the other countries; and we had hoped until recently that we had seen the last of them.

We welcome the enthusiasm of Messrs. Lowy, Marris and Tyler, and suggest that they direct their energies into more constructive channels by working for the support of the S.L.F., and the Socialist societies and clubs associated with it in their own and other universities.

D. N. PRITT, K.C., M.P., *President*.
D. HYNDS, *General Secretary*.
Student Labour Federation,
21 Bedford Chambers.

MADAME DE SÉVIGNÉ

SIR,—While thanking you for your notice of my book, may I point out that those of your readers who have not seen it may be misled by two statements of your reviewer, who says that "We do not hear much about Madame de Grignan" and that Madame de Sévigné is represented as "skittish, arch, and a chatterbox"? Actually, Madame de Grignan is mentioned more than a hundred times and her relationship with her mother and with others is discussed at length; and among the letters selected are many showing Madame de Sévigné's serious side, e.g., her sincerity, her upright character, her efficiency in business affairs, her habit of meditation, her taste for books of devotion, etc. ARTHUR STANLEY

[Our reviewer writes: "I am sorry that I gave a wrong impression when I remarked, in my review of Mr. Arthur Stanley's book on Madame de Sévigné, that we did not hear much of her daughter from him. He actually speaks of her in many places, as he points out. I should have made it clear that her *character* remains vague, not altogether, as I said, through Mr. Stanley's fault, but through the loss of her letters in reply to those of her mother. As to Mr. Stanley's second point, I by no means meant to suggest that none of the translated letters are serious; only that the tone does not correspond with that of the French text in those that reveal the light or witty side of her 'epistolary conversation'."—EDS., *N.S. & N.*]

OIL FROM THE HEDGEROWS

SIR,—In view of the shortage of fats why are not steps taken to explore and develop the possibility of obtaining edible oil from the fruits of the common hawthorn, of which well-nigh unlimited supplies go to waste every autumn in the country hedgerows? I am authoritatively informed that analysis of these berries shows them to contain 19.4 per cent. of oil. Birds, including poultry, readily consume them in the raw state, but it would be worth while exploring whether the oil could be extracted for direct human consumption. An organised scheme already exists for collection of rose hips yielding vitamin C and perhaps haw berry collection could be co-ordinated with it. H. BREWER

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JONATHAN CAPE

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THERE is something about the English race—no, that won't do, because I doubt if Mr. Gollancz belongs to it and, anyway, he throws scorn upon the conception of specific racial characteristics—there is something, then, about the climate and way of life of these islands which produces a disproportionate number of men who devote themselves to the public weal. Look back over our history and you see a long line of disinterested and determined men—Paine and Cobbett and J. S. Mill and E. D. Morel and H. W. Nevinson and, if I may mention a living name, H. N. Brailsford—who are prepared to give time, money and energy to the task of opening the eyes of the public to the existence of sores in the body politic for which we are collectively responsible and which are, therefore, they suggest, our common concern. There is no money, there are no honours—who, indeed, would think of bestowing an honour upon Mr. Gollancz?—and there are no thanks in this job. Rather, there are obloquy and abuse.

Why, then, do they do it? Because they are compassionate and sensitive men who have a care for justice, love and mercy and cannot tolerate, still less take for granted, the savagery of man to man. We are all tender-hearted you will say. Perhaps, perhaps not; but the distinguishing characteristic of these men's concern is not for the sufferings of the few whom they happen to know, or the even fewer whom they happen to care for, but for all men everywhere. In a word, they have a social skin too few and, as a result, feel the pains of humanity as if they were their own. These are the men who give the lie to Dr. Johnson's statement that there are no public worries but only private ones; these men lose many a night's sleep over public worries. Their discomfort turns them into a kind of collective conscience and sets them nagging away at the public, until they have made it feel as uncomfortable as they do themselves. Then, perhaps, it may be impelled to do something to relieve its discomfort by mitigating the evils to which its attention has been drawn. Such is Mr. Gollancz's spiritual lineage, such the race, if he will forgive the word, of which he is a worthy descendant. For years now he has been "at it," prodigal of time, energy and money, sitting on innumerable Committees, making endless speeches—and he is a very moving orator—writing books and pamphlets—and like others of his tribe he has the rare art of making righteousness readable—challenging the indifferent, whipping up the lukewarm, importuning the friendly, on behalf of persecuted Jews, Gentiles, Negroes, refugees, displaced persons, Socialists, Germans—in fact, of suffering people, whoever they may be, all the world over.

His new book* falls into two parts, a thesis and its practical application. The thesis is as follows: There are certain Christian virtues which have distinguished Western civilisation; these are mercy, pity, humility and justice. Mr. Gollancz does not mean that they have always been practised; far from it, but they have been praised and some have sometimes tried to practice them. Nor does he mean to imply that their practice or even their praise is dependent upon the acceptance of Christianity, although he appears to hold that in Christianity they have received their most forcible and persuasive statement. For it is from Christianity that the overriding principle which all these virtues imply is derived. This is the principle of respect for personality as such. For this principle, Mr. Gollancz holds, involves a recognition of "the essential spiritual equality of all human beings including ourselves and perhaps every living thing," by which he means, I take it, that we are all equal in the eyes of God, that we are all equally important to ourselves, that we all, therefore, have an equal right to realise ourselves, provided that in so doing we do not interfere with similar realisation on the part of others. The recognition of this principle in politics is the fruit of a century and more of liberal and individualist thinking. Its test in practice is the attitude we adopt to the humiliation of our enemies. When Amery and Joyce, Streicher and Goering and the rest are publicly humiliated do we gloat or don't we? Answer, of course, we usually do. But to do so, Mr. Gollancz points out, is to infringe the principle of respect for personality.

The principle has its social corollary in freedom of speech. The arguments for this are familiar and should not need restatement, although Gollancz thinks that they do. The test of our acceptance of the principle is our attitude to freedom of speech for Fascists. Is free speech, we are often asked, to be allowed for the purpose of suppressing free speech? If we answer "No," then, says Mr. Gollancz, we are repudiating the principle. Thus societies, for example, the National Council of Civil Liberties, which were formed to uphold freedom are sharply admonished that, "if you silence Fascists for fear that Fascism will be established, you have already half-established it by the very fact of silencing them." Turning to politics, Gollancz points out that the inspiration of the Labour movement in this country derives in part from an ethical source. The early preachers of Socialism sought not only to enable all men to make their living, but also to enable them to achieve lives worth living; they were, in other words, concerned with the *values* of life. Upon the Labour Government, then, Gollancz concludes, there is laid a special obligation to safeguard the values and to practise the virtues of our Christian-humanist civilisation. As a convinced Socialist, he maintains that "in the world of to-day 'liberalism' can preserve itself only by flowering into Socialism."

Now, these values and virtues are increasingly denied in theory and flouted in practice. The bulk of Gollancz's book consists of illustrations from the speeches of political leaders, from the utterances of generals and administrators, from the pronouncements of lawyers and from articles in the Press, designed to demonstrate the extent of their repudiation.

Here we come to the application of the thesis in Gollancz's proposal that we should be permitted voluntarily to cut down our rations in order that we may send more food to starving Germany. His campaign will, no doubt, be familiar to readers of this journal and I need not describe it here, except to say that Gollancz's main concern is to show that his proposals constitute a practical application of the principles upon which he has laid stress, while their rejection is their denial. In my opinion he is successful in this. He also seeks to show that the Government's attitude is a repudiation both of Socialist and of Christian principles.

What are the causes for the lowering of the standards and the repudiation of the values which our civilisation has sought to maintain, and of the resultant decline both in public and in private conduct? Mr. Gollancz cites a number, including what he calls "the normalisation of resistance" psychology—when it has been for years a public duty to lie, cheat, rob, hurt and murder it is difficult to break the habit, even if one wants to; the intensification of nationalism, and the examples of legalised revenge, masquerading as barbaric justice, afforded by the trials of Tanner of Finland, of Mihailovich and at Nuremburg. Most weight, however, is attached to the spread of Communism through the growth of the power of Soviet Russia. Gollancz is not opposed to Communist ideals—how, indeed, as a convinced Socialist could he be?—but he sharply censures the repudiation of the canons of Christian and liberal morality involved in Communist methods. It is in the acceptance of the doctrines of Gletkin as explicitly propounded in *Darkness at Noon* and recently stated with greater circumspection by Professor Bernal, the doctrines, namely, that the end justifies the means and that morality may be subordinated to the interests of the Communist State to which it is relative, that Gollancz finds "the strongest positive forces opposed to the stability and development of our Western civilisation."

It may be said that none of this is new; that war gives a charter to violence and that it is only to be expected that war's aftermath will witness a decline in civilised standards. Gollancz's answer is that the new feature in the situation to-day is a novelty less of practice than of theory. We have a long way to go yet before the practice of the world can be made to square with its professions, but the first step is for its professions to condemn its practices. This step, taken by the last century, has now been consciously retraced. For there is, in the contemporary world, a deliberate cult of toughness, which makes men ashamed of pity as of a crime.

Gollancz, I think, is right. Plato has a significant passage on what he calls the persistence of habit without principle,—"philosophy" is the word he uses. He points out that ways of life originally embraced on principle may become so habitual that they persist through their own momentum, when the principles on which they were originally based have been abandoned or forgotten. At least they may so persist in quiet times, but in periods of strain and crisis the habitual way of life, lacking any foundation in principle, crumbles and finally collapses with catastrophic rapidity. This, I think—and Gollancz, I gather, would agree—is what is happening in our time. The inheritors of a religious tradition, we live in an age which is to all intents and purposes without religious belief. For a time the ethical principles, for which Christianity provided an other-worldly backing, survived and agnostics and rationalists continued to live exemplary lives. But in the years which succeeded the first world war the principles which had restrained some Victorians from the more obvious forms of self-indulgence and self-aggrandisement were falling everywhere into desuetude, with the result that, when the next war came, deprived of their metaphysical foundations and lacking observance in practice, they were pitched overboard after the view of the universe in which they had been grounded.

Whatever the cause, there can, I think, be no doubt as to the facts. Gollancz is surely right in saying that the ethical principles which the Greeks announced, the Christian developed, the humanists endorsed and the plain man borrowed from all three, are being rapidly lost. It is hard to resist the conclusion that it is time they were returned. One of the lessons which our generation is painfully learning is the value of hypocrisy. Even if hypocrisy is only the lip service that virtue pays to vice, we have come to realise how important it is that the payment should be made.

Gollancz would be the first to complain if I allowed no note of criticism to creep into this article. There is, then, a tendency to look down the nose of Puritanism at frivolity and fun. Isn't he, for example, bearing a little too hardly on the weaknesses of our fallible human nature when he criticises the press for celebrating and the people for enjoying their "second helpings" last Christmas? Gollancz, again, finds it hard to forgive people for not being so concerned about the plight of starving Germans as he is himself. Why, he asks us, in effect, don't you feel more, the implication being that we are wholly selfish and self-centred. There are two things I would bid him bear in mind. First, that the capacities for sympathy and indignation grow fatigued; with the best will in the world one simply cannot keep them up. Secondly, the world is to-day so full of occasions for sympathy and appeals for help, that the fact that one is not responding to any particular appeal does not necessarily mean that one is callously indifferent. It *may* mean—it probably doesn't—that our available supplies of money, time and sympathy are already engaged elsewhere and engaged on a cause no less deserving than that of the starving peoples of Central Europe that Gollancz so eloquently pleads.

C. E. M. JOAD

* *Our Threatened Values*. Gollancz, 5s.

A REMARKABLE BIOGRAPHY

Morell Mackenzie. By R. SCOTT STEVENSON. *Heinemann.* 15*s.*

Morell Mackenzie was the English physician who treated the Crown Prince Frederick of Prussia unsuccessfully for a disease of the larynx. That is what most people remember of him to-day, if they remember him at all. But in 1887-8, when the political future of Germany was to be decided by the success or failure of Mackenzie's treatment, he enjoyed as much notoriety as any man in Europe. The Crown Prince lived just long enough to succeed his father as Emperor; but when he died three months later and the reactionary Kaiser William came to the throne, a storm of obloquy was loosed in Germany by Bismarck against Mackenzie, the incompetent doctor, the ex-Empress, Queen Victoria's daughter, and the whole pack of interfering English. Most injudiciously Mackenzie replied to the slurs on his professional skill in a book, *The Fatal Illness of Frederick the Noble*. Instead of defending his own diagnosis and treatment, he chose to attack his colleagues, the leading surgeons and physicians of Germany, with whom he had been in consultation. The book completed his discredit. The medical profession is probably the closest corporation in the world, with a vested interest in its prestige. The Royal College of Physicians, the Royal College of Surgeons and the British Medical Association united to denounce such an outrageous breach of medical decorum. The weight of authority told with the public, whose only knowledge of medical matters comes from doctors. The merits of the case were completely overlooked. In vain did Mackenzie bring a libel action against *The Times* and win it. The pundits of his profession had said he behaved badly, and his patient died. Worst of all, from the point of view of his reputation, Mackenzie died himself a few years later; leaving his most vindictive enemy, Sir Felix Semon, alive, to go about saying for another quarter of a century: "He killed my Emperor."

A great throat specialist, actuated by respect for Mackenzie's pioneer work in laryngology as well as a desire to probe the Crown Prince's mysterious illness in the light of modern medical knowledge, has found time in the last twenty years to collate and study all the information available about this old controversy. The quantity and variety of testimony to be sifted was formidable. Mr. Scott Stevenson's bibliography extends to nine pages. *Morell Mackenzie*, which is the happy result, combines a short but informative account of Mackenzie's life with a most lucid, detailed and impartial chronicle of his treatment of the Crown Prince's disease, which was the dramatic turning-point in his career; it is a remarkable achievement in medical biography.

The character of Mackenzie was radically tainted by ambition; and an ambitious man may be impressive, but can seldom make himself attractive to his contemporaries. As his biographer admits, Mackenzie, who was the eldest son of a poor country doctor, took up medicine as a profession out of no desire to help suffering humanity, but to make a name and fortune for himself; in which pursuit he was perfectly successful, as ability and ambition often run hand in hand. But his path to success was unattended by friends and lined with enemies. By the time he reached the top of his tree, as the leading laryngologist in England, he was dogmatic and quarrelsome; and moreover displayed that most rebarbative characteristic—complacent self-consciousness. His partner, Greville Macdonald, describes him at one of his own dinner parties: "As a rule when everyone is laughing, Morell looks up and around with a solemn face as much as to say, 'I see the joke, but Morell Mackenzie smiles not.' If he does unbend as far as to straighten his lips and elevate their corners, he looks about from one to the other, as one who should say, 'I smile, and Morell Mackenzie smiles; Morell Mackenzie and I are one—more, I created Mackenzie and saw that he was good!' I have never seen a more self-satisfied man."

When this pugnacious careerist was summoned to Berlin by the grandest physicians and surgeons in Germany, for consultation on the treatment of the Crown Prince's larynx, he must have welcomed the heaven-sent opportunity to assert to the whole world his pre-eminence in his profession, and that, unfortunately for him, was exactly what he did. From this point of the story events circle round the state of the Crown Prince's larynx. What exactly was the matter with it, when Mackenzie was called in? (Here I must utter a low note of warning to the general reader. *Morell Mackenzie* is published as one of Heinemann's Medical Books and makes no concession to lay ignorance of medical terms.) The Prussian laryngologists had found on the Crown Prince's left vocal cord a pale little nodule, which made his voice hoarse. They had failed to remove it by cauterisation and began to suspect it was cancer. Professor von Bergmann proposed an operation, either to split the larynx or remove it entirely—it was a little uncertain which. Even Bismarck was somewhat hazy about laryngotomy and laryngectomy; and was not sure what they proposed to do to his Crown Prince under the knife. But he recognised that it was a serious operation and might prove fatal: so the Germans agreed to get another opinion before operating. Mackenzie was chosen because of his European reputation, and possibly to please the Crown Princess, who was English.

Mackenzie, on his arrival in May, 1887, refused to agree to the need of a serious operation until the nature of the nodule had been determined by removing a fragment and having it examined under a microscope. When the Germans said this could not be done, Mackenzie did it; and no trace of malignant disease was found in the specimen. The operation therefore was abandoned, and Mackenzie took charge of the Crown Prince's larynx. At first everything went swimmingly: Mackenzie removed the nodule with a forceps, the Crown Prince regained his voice, and Queen Victoria knighted Mackenzie at Balmoral. Then the larynx began to swell again. By November, Mackenzie had to sign a bulletin admitting there was a malignant new growth. At this stage the Crown Prince realised he had not long to live. He declined to undergo laryngectomy—a fantastically dangerous operation at that date—and was content to live as long as nature would allow him under Mackenzie's care, with recourse to palliative measures only. He lived another seven months. The post-mortem established the presence of cancer.

The gist of the case against Mackenzie (Sir Felix Semon's "He Killed my Emperor") was that by his refusal to recognise cancer in May, 1887, he prevented the German surgeons from operating in good time and saving the Crown Prince's life. Until Mr. R. S. Stevenson took up the cudgels, this case has been allowed to go by default. The facts, suggested by 50 years fuller acquaintance with the larynx, appear to be: that the pale nodule first observed was not cancerous, but syphilitic. The Crown Prince was said to have had an intrigue with a Spanish lady in Egypt at the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Mackenzie included a treatment for syphilis among his palliative measures; and confided to an intimate friend that he felt sure the Crown Prince had had syphilis. Secondly, that if Von Bergmann had operated, as he wanted to, at 7 a.m. on May 21st, 1887, the Crown Prince would have been incredibly lucky to survive the experiment. But, of course, if Mackenzie had diagnosed syphilis openly from the start in the devoted husband of Queen Victoria's daughter, *he* would have been incredibly lucky to get a knighthood and the Cross and Star of the Hohenzollern Order.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

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A POET'S POET

Thanks Before Going. By JOHN MASEFIELD. *Heinemann.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

It is a disadvantage for a writer to have too vivid a personality or a career too unorthodox, for his work will always be less generally discussed than the details of his life. How few good critical estimates there are of the writings of Byron, for example, or of Shelley. And now our expectations are aroused but not satisfied by a new book of notes on Rossetti by Mr. Masefield. It does deal with the poems, it is true, but it adds little to our knowledge or judgment of them. Mr. Masefield has outlined the narratives, commented on the details that please him, and made other scattered observations, all in a tone of grave and reverent enthusiasm. But, though his seer-like manner does not persuade us to accept his valuations, the inspiration which he claims to have derived from Rossetti is of more than passing interest. "His poems and paintings, his intelligence in all matters of art, the beauty and fire of his faith," says Mr. Masefield, "made him by much the most kindling influence among the young men of my time." The effect of one artist on another is always worth examining.

Rossetti's work was certainly beautiful, but its beauty was of an inorganic kind—a stained glass window has the same mosaic-like quality. What Rossetti had to contribute to a young writer was a violent imaginative stimulus, and in his verse at least a considerable respect for technique. It is this technical perfection that impresses one most in his poetry, I think—even more than his overpowering sense of atmosphere or his command of story-telling. Of course, any child brought up in the Rossetti household, with its literary magazines and daily sonnet writing and tests of metrical skill, could scarcely fail to acquire considerable control over language. This sureness was something that he lacked as an artist, though it was by his paintings that he lived and was principally known. In them are reflected his most characteristic qualities as a man; his abilities and inabilities; the surface brilliance, the sensuality, the amateurishness, the genius, the crudity, the inadequacies. (He never had the patience to master anatomy and perspective.) His poems, however, have all the preciseness and direction that his life lacked. He was incapable of writing a discordant line or verse. And this government of words was never to leave him; even as an ageing man, undisciplined, gross, haunted, he continued to write such poems as *The White Ship* and the impressive *King's Tragedy*. The pre-Raphaelite clarity of his detail is such that, when he occasionally uses sham-mediæval diction such as *dim, wan, pale, plaintive, dainty-thin*, he has a self-conscious air of imitating his friends' mannerisms. And generally one finds that these things are excised or added after the first version. His effects are highly sophisticated; even his simplicity (as in *My Sister's Sleep* or *The Woodspurge*) suggests a conscious restraint. The same deliberateness is behind a "simple" passage such as:

> I climbed at Bruges all the flight
> The belfry has of ancient stone.
> For leagues I saw the east wind blown;
> The earth was grey, the sky was white.
> I stood so near upon the height
> That my flesh felt the carillon.

and this elaborate verse from *The Bride's Prelude*:

> Within the window's heaped recess
> The light was counterchanged
> In blent reflexes manifold
> From perfume-caskets of wrought gold
> And gems the bride's hair could not hold.

But whatever he is describing—the oppressive heat of a summer afternoon, heavy with threatened evil, a woman burning the wax effigy of her false lover, the desolateness of a winter storm, the court of Verona during Dante's exile—the effect is always one of suspended animation—static, framed, like a painting—*nature morte*.

Mr. Masefield clearly writes from a recollection of the early stimulus he received from Rossetti. One is not made at ease by the Prospero-like

manner that he wears in this book, even though this Prospero appears to have thrown his wand and books into the sea. And *without* a volume of Rossetti at hand it is difficult to gain much from these notes, or to read without frustration such comments as:

> Sonnet LXIX Autumn Idleness. The three charming lines about the deer are a poem by themselves. The twelfth and thirteenth lines are a Chinese lyric by themselves; some would perhaps add to them the fourteenth also.

But in making us turn to the original poems he has done a service. *Dante at Verona* is a remarkable poem which deserves to be read again and remembered, and this is true of the translations from the Italian, which are less well-known than the ballads, but in which some of Rossetti's finest work is to be found. There is something to be gained from the fascination of good workmanship, and even from submitting, briefly, to a kind of splendour which our way of life has caused, on the whole, to disappear from our literature.

NAOMI LEWIS

ARABIA

Arabia Phoenix. By GERALD DE GAURY. *Harrap.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The interior of Arabia was more inaccessible than Tibet when Col. de Gaury first visited Ibn Saud's capital. In this book he describes only one of his visits to Riyadh, but he writes with the authoritative knowledge derived from earlier and later sojourns in the royal palace. The interest of his excellent account derives largely from the extraordinary degree in which the country displayed the ways of life, thought and feeling of the Seventh Century.

The Wahhabi religious revival, which began at the end of the eighteenth century, imposed the strictest obedience to the laws of the Koran, and its adherents by their mixture of fanaticism, puritanism and military vigour invite comparison with our Roundheads. It may be noticed, moreover, that the Wahhabi, in this respect again resembling the Roundheads, do not share that veneration for virginity as an aid for saintliness which marks historic Christianity. Ibn Saud declares that he so far resembles the Prophet Mohammed that three things in the world he loved—women, scent and prayer. (Might not Milton have made the same boast?) But there is one capital difference between the Wahhabi and the Roundheads. Cromwell's men bore little resemblance, except in their own conceit, to the Hebrew sheiks on whom they professed to model themselves; they were indeed the forerunners of capitalism. The Arabian enthusiasts, on the other hand, were—and remain—extreme reactionaries, seeking to extirpate every habit that did not obtain the approval of Mohammed. Tobacco is no less fiercely forbidden than alcohol; and the more rigorous refrain from the enjoyment of even that fragrant bean which is the most prized product of their land.

Ibn Saud is by all accounts a statesman of genius. (He was so perceptive as to recognise in our darkest hour that we should win the war.) He used the Wahhabi fervour to form a united Arabia; and having imposed law and order over a territory nearly twenty times the size of England, he now damps down religious fanaticism and uses Western technicians to develop the riches of his country. He has multiplied wells, aqueducts, roads; inaugurated health-centres, wireless stations and airfields. Already Col. de Gaury has seen the Arabia he knew suffer a metamorphosis: the Phoenix has become more powerful, but the glory of the plumage is dimmed. As Col. de Gaury puts it, the Twentieth Century has moved into the Seventh.

Despite the optimistic title of his book, he must regret this with a large part of himself, though he does not say so. For he is one of those Englishmen who have found in Arabia a way of life beautifully congenial to their temperament. He writes with compelling conviction about the stimulating air of the desert and the limitless hospitality traditional among its people. I wish I could quote the whole of a passage in which he expresses the emotions of a traveller who finds himself five hundred miles from the nearest fellow-European.

> His only fear is that he will be forced to return to the crowded Western world. He sees that world now in its true light. He thinks with horror of its squalid propinquities, and remembers that he used to be too hurried to reflect and too busy to hope . . .

Such a preference for solitude has distinguished some of the finest spirits in every age and civilization; and even those of us who are most addicted to those pleasures which only great cities can provide must often wonder whether the price we pay for them is not too high. (Think only of the daily indignity of standing in buses—or dodging them among mean buildings plastered with equally offensive posters.) Those of us who are neither economists nor Imperialists are persuaded that this country is disgustingly over-populated. And even the most superstitious devotees of natural science must wonder, in face of the atom bomb, whether man's knowledge has not outrun his wisdom. Such views as Col. de Gaury's are therefore much less easily dismissed as sentimental than they once would have been. Ruskin and William Morris are perceived to be more far-seeing than Mill and Macaulay. We no longer have the feeling that changes which are inevitable must therefore be also desirable.

My complaint against *Arabia Phoenix* is that it is much too short: the author has shared with us only a fragment of his knowledge. Also the photographs seem to be very ill-reproduced. But the reader will find the book a vivid evocation of a society in which men seem to be happier than is the usual lot. This happiness comes from exact adaptation to their environment; and the irony is that this has been achieved in an environment that is peculiarly hostile.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

DEEDS, NOT WORDS

The Autobiography of David ——. Edited by ERNEST RAYMOND. *Gollancz.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

A Country Beat. A Police Constable's Story. By LOUIS QUINAIN. *Methuen.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Escape to Danger. By FLIGHT-LIEUTENANT PAUL BRICKHILL and CONRAD NORTON. *Faber.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Bernard Shaw and W. B. Yeats. Letters to Florence Farr. Edited by CLIFFORD BAX. *Home and Van Thal.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Man Midwife. The Further Experiences of John Knyveton, M.D., late surgeon in the British Fleet, during the years 1763–1809. Edited and narrated by ERNEST GRAY. *Hale.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

In even the worst autobiography one may discover what all but the best novels lack, a skeleton of truth. Truth? Common honesty in the writer, and an unwillingness or an inability to rehearse events that could never happen. Unambitious merits, perhaps; but nobody who has read promiscuously will be inclined to despise them.

For one thing, unlike the novelist, the autobiographer giving himself away (and who in the circumstances doesn't give away a little?) is of fascinating interest. He need not be a good writer, or even a writer, in the professional sense, at all. The "writers," among those listed above,

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are Shaw and Yeats; but it is not their letters—charming though they are—that make an impression; far more memorable are the fantastic aerial scrapes in *Escape to Danger*, the predicament of David ——; and the book I should choose to read again is *Man Midwife*, for its curious and bluff revival of eighteenth-century England.

David ——. His photograph reveals a strong, wincing handsomeness, trimly bearded in middle-age. An outdoor man, one would guess, sailor or mountaineer; but that, as it happens, is precisely what he is not. Since childhood he has suffered from agoraphobia in its extreme form: the one thing he has never been able to do lightly is to take a walk. His book is, first, an experience of mental pain. Any open space—street without doorways, square, stretch of common—is as dangerous to him as though every yard of it were covered by machine-guns. But he wouldn't die if he went on? No, he would walk a few paces, then hesitate and fall, to remain incapable of speech or movement until carried home. The after-effects would be days or weeks of convalescence. A third perhaps of every year in the life of David —— has been eaten up by this disease, which is of course the more virulent for being not physical but mental or moral. Struggle: evasion—there seems here to be no escape; or rather none was found by David ——, though he has been a tramp and an inmate of hospitals, has married, edited a daily newspaper, been psycho-analysed, found his own kind of religion. Disability number one. Number two, less invincible if more frightening than the first, exhibitionism; this again in the medical and not a popular sense. How did David ——, with the necessity to survive from day to day and to earn a living, make his way? How did he write this book? In bits and pieces, so far as the book goes, though with a remarkable lucidity. Mr. Ernest Raymond has skilfully put together and edited the papers handed to him by the author; he has also provided an introduction, in which he sentimentalises over a friend and makes some extravagant literary claims—"material for a great—a very great—novel." Why drag in that? There is no need for the reader to consider *The Autobiography of David* —— as other than it is: a valuable piece of self-portraiture which extends our knowledge and sympathies. It is often well written despite the fact that its author has been a journalist. He never quite discovers—is perhaps precluded from discovering—the source of his ailments.

The reason why we pick up *A Country Beat* is the same that prompted its author to write: books by policemen are rare. Mr. Quinain knocks the bottom out of several old jokes, one of which is that his is a lazy profession. The hours of duty are long and off-duty there is still work to do. Interminable report-writing seems to be the bugbear of this life. After training in the early years of the war, P.C. Quinain had two village jobs, which he describes with an acute and humorous eye. Spy-mania enlivened his by no means depressing round.

The mass escape from Stalag Luft 3 in March, 1944, and the consequent shooting of 50 escaped R.A.F. officers provide the theme of *Escape to Danger*. Admirable account of the escape itself, on trolleys along an electrically-lit tunnel 300 yards long, the biggest and the best organised escape ever made. This takes up the last third (150 pages) of the book. The earlier part jumbles camp routine with stories of how the various prisoners came to get there. A little of the organisation that went to the Great Tunnel Escape would have been helpful here; the authors don't attempt to give their narrative any kind of shape, and have a trick of summarising a story before telling it, much of the excitement being thus thrown away. However the stories are themselves so amazing that they would survive even harsher treatment. One pilot, shot down over Norway, fell 18,000ft. without a parachute and landed in snow, from which he was dug out suffering from frostbite. Another was blown out of his aeroplane when a direct hit burst his bomb-load; he also got off, dropping on pine-trees, with the loss of one arm. And, most staggering of all, Flight-Lieutenant Herman turning over and over parachuteless in the dark, with fragments of his plane floating round him, hit something with a terrific bump and came out of his momentary black-out to find himself gripping the legs of his air-gunner whose parachute had just opened. "Is there anybody around?" asked the gunner, and the other replied, "Yes, I'm down here." "Where? Where are you?" "Here. Just below. I'm hanging on to your legs." "Be careful of my right leg, Joe, I think it's broken." "O.K. Are any of the crew around, do you know?" "I think the navigator and wireless operator are above somewhere." "Good show." Then they fell in silence. (It was worked out later that Herman had fallen more than two miles before crashing into his air-gunner. Neither was seriously hurt.)

Shaw, needless to say, gets much the best of the exchanges in the letter-casket brought to light by Mr. Clifford Bax. He is rude, gallant, flying off at a tangent. Miss Farr had played the heroine in *Widowers' Houses* and for her *Arms and the Man* was written. Further than that the still youthful Methusalah was disinclined to go. He exudes tweeds, Fabianism, bicycling, mock poetics, the theatre; she, after trying to pin him down, drifts away to poetry readings and Vedanta. Yeats comes on the scene somnambulistically playful, when she is busy "cantilating." No letters from Miss Farr printed; none needed. An agreeable minor episode.

Man Midwife takes us far more vividly and deeply into its time and place: Regency London. "Deeply" perhaps is not the word for a busy, matter-of-fact journal of large and small events; yet if the author, a retired naval surgeon who became a fashionable obstetrician or "man midwife," had set out to paint a critical portrait of himself and his surroundings he could hardly have picked his detail better. Here a Nash terrace goes up, there the mob overturns a carriage; a boy of 14 is publicly hanged for stealing 3*d*.; the tea is thrown into Boston Harbour; Johnson walks the streets, and dies, not (records the attendant doctor) making a good end of it; *Vortigern* produces cat-calls at Drury Lane, and ends the story of the Ireland forgeries; Emma catches the eye of society with her plastic poses; Junius lashes, Burke ennobles; the Prince Regent and his fellow-drunks drive to Windsor to enjoy the old man's ravings; Jenner demonstrates in a Holborn hall his new treatment of inoculating with cow-pox; America is lost, Trafalgar won; the nation files past the body of Nelson lying in state at Greenwich; candles in every window and crowds gaping at the "transparencies" celebrate—on April Fool's Day, insists the writer—the signing of the Peace of Amiens; the price of beer and bread may be coming down; young Master Brodie supped with us last night . . . Knyveton himself is a kindly, bluff, not insensitive, likeable man; he does not set out to portray himself, but his life is nearest to us among many lives. But the stench, violence, clangour! Every age, I suppose, seems brutal to succeeding ages, and the reader in A.D. 2000 will no doubt recoil from the prisons, road accidents and atom-bombs of to-day. But who is keeping to-day the sort of diary, neither too personal nor too detached, that will inveigle the future as Knyveton does? We don't know who; if we did, his pedestrianisms would bore us stiff. I must add, by the way, that all Knyveton's medical detail is of absorbing interest, and that

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two earlier diaries of Knyveton have already been published, *Surgeon's Mate* and *The Diary of a Surgeon in the Year* 1751–1752, the second of these only in America. Mr. Ernest Gray, the editor, seems to have done his work extremely well, though what "edited and narrated by" is supposed to mean on the title-page he doesn't explain and I can't imagine. G. W. STONIER

NEW NOVELS

The Cruise of the Breadwinner. By H. E. BATES. *Michael Joseph.* 5s.

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A Flask for the Journey. By F. L. GREEN. *Michael Joseph.* 10s. 6d.

The Heretics. By HUMPHREY SLATER. *Secker and Warburg.* 8s. 6d.

Here are two accepted masters, one of them a little past the peak of his reputation; a formidable novelist who has been more than once accused of genius and is yearly expected to produce his masterpiece; and a man of known, wayward gifts who takes to novel-writing for the first time. Mr. Bates has written a long-short story of a lugsail fishing boat on war-time patrol, with four men and a boy. Three men die of machine-gunning from the air. The fat, ignorant skipper makes the grade as a man, and the boy ages. Mr. O'Flaherty gives us a period piece. His novel is firmly dated 1879. It introduces Parnell and Davitt, Fenians, the Land League and the new weapon of boycott. Mr. Green tells the inward story of a prisoner-of-war, with more than a pinch of Kafkan inversion, argues that freedom is most easily found in a cell and appends a love-story intended to show how the free imprison themselves. Mr. Slater has undertaken the detestable task of parallel histories, three children who suffer the Albigensian outrage and the Children's Crusade of 1212 appearing grown up in the Spanish War of 1936.

It is a little late in the day to pay Mr. Bates compliments on his prose, his powers of observation or his construction. In this sanguinary tale, his command never falters. Mr. Bates is a philosophical realist, one of those for whom the phenomenal world exists. What he sees he describes with near perfection. In the boy's craving for the dying German pilot's binoculars, there is symbolism, but the symbol is recognised as a symbol and its occasion known to Mr. Bates. Hallucination belongs to adolescence and to fatigue. All three vanish when the boat comes to harbour.

Mr. O'Flaherty is realist with regard to the story itself. It is no more contained in his writing than the physical universe is contained in consciousness. Once projected, it takes place outside and independently of its author, and Mr. O'Flaherty writes merely to call the reader's attention to it. He writes copiously. There is everything here that will be necessary for a final shooting-script and a good deal to cut. The "he" or "she" is both subject and object, sees and is seen. The author looks into his character's mind and tells us what she is thinking, emerges and describes her gesture of agitation. But first the story had to be projected, imagined or merely chosen. And it is in these earlier stages that Mr. O'Flaherty exhibits philosophical idealism, colouring with his consciousness a world in which he does not quite believe.

It is a matter of historical knowledge that in 1879 violent passions were loosed in Ireland. *Land* has this verisimilitude because it is a period-piece. But Mr. O'Flaherty's characters have always had violent passions. Because of the events which followed the last war, that the Irish have violent passions is a convention accepted by English readers. Doom hangs over Manister House as it hung over Cold Comfort Farm, because that is how Mr. O'Flaherty likes it.

This is an old-fashioned way of writing a novel. Whether it is still a good one, who is to decide? Certainly it allows passages of great power, and Mr. O'Flaherty builds up to his final chorus of death and triumph in the mountains with undiminished cunning. But contemporary trends in the novel tend in greater or less degree towards the extreme of philosophical idealism, the solipsism of Proust, Joyce, Virginia Woolf. Whatever his views on the outside world, a conscientious novelist tends now to behave *as if* he accepted the idealist conclusions, in other words, to see that his picture is framed all the way round by a single consciousness, whether it be that of an "I" or a "he" functioning as a distanced "I," a "he" who is never treated objectively, never described from the outside except in his own terms.

A Flask for the Journey suffers, like Mr. Slater's novel, from its prearranged schema. The first two parts are told by the "I" of the novel, Jack Kaspan (note the Kafkan initial "K"), to a beautiful girl who comes to the house at which he is working alone in an unnamed city during a General Strike. This narrative is heightened by all the concealed poetic symbolism at Mr. Green's command. The island castle is reminiscent not only of Kafka's castle but of the setting of *La Grande Illusion*, and the Commandant is perfect Stroheim. The General Strike provides a condition of suspended activity at the heart of which consciousness is all and objects do not exist. Despite a few *longueurs* and faulty observations of the behaviour of people in society and occasional illiterate uses of words (hallmarks of the independent writer?) these two parts are wonderfully sustained. But then, in the morning, when Jane is gone and a policeman calls because a young man has committed suicide, we are made to hear the antithetical love-story in full. Sketched briefly as an epilogue, this story could have been of exceptional beauty. As it is, it becomes a little boring and repetitive. *A Flask for the Journey* is not yet Mr. Green's masterpiece.

The juxtaposition of stories, whether to prove a point or merely to imply a parallel, must surely arise from a journalistic and not an æsthetic motive. It seems to me therefore that Mr. Slater was bound to fail as an artist. I think he also fails as a journalist. The classic instance of this kind of book is Henri Barbusse's *Chains*, which tells stories of human bondage from prehistoric times to the present day. Even an operation in logic requires three steps. Mr. Slater has invited his book to split clean in two, and it does. His second story could only have completed his first if the pieces had fallen into place with uncanny exactitude. They do not, and Mr. Slater is too honest to make them.

This second story, of the Spanish civil war, is sensitive, intelligent and at times moving. More fully elaborated and printed by itself, it might have been a fine novel. Against the first story, of the Children's Crusade, there is nothing to be said except on grounds of scholarship. It tells what happened in Avignon with a brutal flippancy which never becomes repulsive because it is controlled with a nervous brilliancy and set off by loving observations of the details of child behaviour and because "the poetry is in the pity." And so much learning is carried off so lightly that one is only the more offended when fundamental inaccuracies creep in towards the end. Bourriche would scarcely have been tried for witchcraft at that date. With all due respect to Margaret Murray and her Dianic cult, witchcraft amounted to precious little until the appearance of Messrs. Kramer and Sprenger in 1484. Even the torture of heretics received no pontifical sanction until the reign of Innocent IV (*ad extirpanda*). Very little of what was done at Avignon was done on clearly formulated doctrinal grounds, and the machinery of Inquisition was crude. Moreover,

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